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February, 1958 - 25c

Death On The North Plains

Blazing Life Story of the Mighty Sioux!

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MYSTERY MAN OF MULLET ISLAND

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by Nell Murbarger

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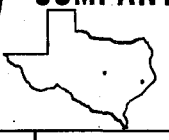

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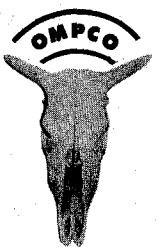

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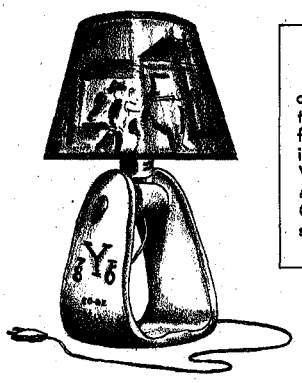

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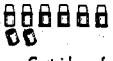

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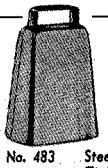

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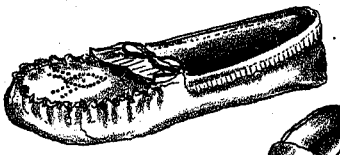

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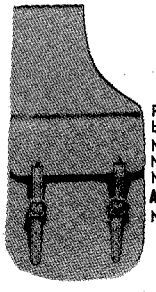

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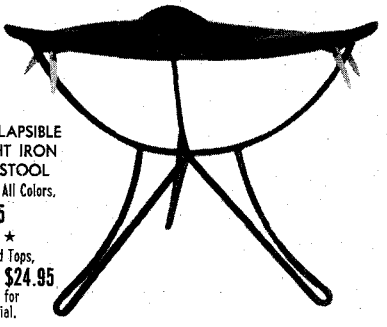

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Coming Up!

ONCE in the proverbial blue moon a story comes into our offices that is a natural for True West. Not dry history, exhumed by laborious research from books and piled dully fact upon fact for TW readers to yawn over, but a tense, breathless adventure narrative vividly related by the very man who lived it. Such a yarn is "Outlaw Exterminators, Inc." by Clay Calhoun, as tape recorded in Clay's own words by Tom Bailey. You'll travel step by step with Deputy Sheriff Calhoun and his comrades of Outlaw Exterminators, Inc., as they trail the deadly Ape Man who had murdered five men in less than four months. Finally, under a desert moon, Clay Calhoun and the Ape Man stand face to face and shoot it out. Melodramatic? Sure—but absolute, documented, blazing truth!

Lost mine stories are perennial favorites among TW readers; scoffers notwithstanding. And when you have a lost mine story by the inimitable J. Frank Dobie—well, folks, that's a blue chip parlay that just can't be beat. The yarn concerns Dr. Daniel B. McCall, of San Saba, Texas, and his hunt for the Lost Apache Mine—the latest information on the mine, etc. This article is, in effect, an answer to Dr. E. R. Harrington's piece in a recent issue of TW challenging the whole subject of lost mines and buried treasure.

The mighty buffalo has long been a fascinating subject to scholars of Western lore. Mabel C. Olson's "Dynamite on Hoofs!" shows the shaggy lords of the plains in a different role—that of "Pullman buffaloes." It's the action-packed story of how thirty-five Montana cowhands rounded up 700 of the famous Pablo-Allard bison herd and pushed them aboard special railroad cars bound for Wainwright National Park in Canada. The boys got the job done—but not without a tremendous battle.

NOT long ago a national television program was devoted to an intensely interesting film of a strange tribe of Indians—the mysterious Seris of Tiburon Island, a few miles off the mainland of the state of Sonora, Mexico. The TV show excited the interest of many of our readers, who wrote in asking that we publish an article on the Seris. We agreed to try—and finally came up with a dandy. Robert M. Hyatt's article, "The Seris—Indians That Time Forgot," graphically sketches the history of the Seris from the time of Cortez to the present. Here is a yarn guaranteed to make you forget—for a time at least—the Russian Sputnik, the threat of war, high taxes, and the high cost of living. Don't miss it!

You think the famous OK Corral ruckus between the Earps and the Clanton-McLowery faction was the greatest gunfight in the history of the West? Man, you're plumb wrong! The little border town of Campo, California, holds that doubtful distinction from the bloody afternoon in 1875 when the Gaskill boys rubbed out the old Joaquin Murrietta gang. There were more people involved and twice as many killed at Campo as there were at the OK Corral at Tombstone in 1881.

Of all the legendary and semi-legendary bear hunters of the West, from Davy Crockett down, Ben Lilly was the acknowledged champion. A fabulous character, a master woodsman and a devout Christian, Ben never so much as fired a shot on the Sabbath. Norman G. Woolsey tells the absorbing story of Ben Lilly's longest bear hunt—a grizzly chase that started in the United States and wound up in Mexico!

Florence Fenley's article, "Things I Never Saw Before," is best described as a truly unique piece of Western Americana. J. Frank

(Continued on page 28)

January-February, 1958
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True West

All True—All Fact—Stories of the Real West

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A "SMALL" PUBLICATION

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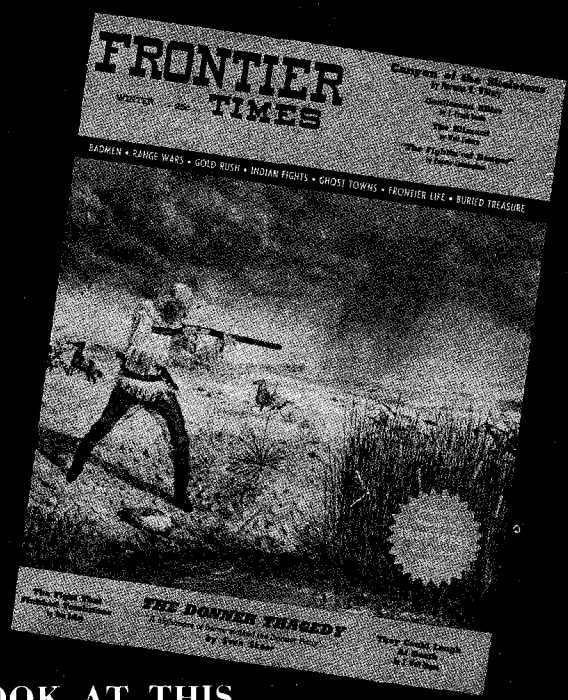
It's On The Newsstands

NOW!



RIGHT there beside TRUE WEST it ought to be. It's new, absolutely untried—and we're as excited over it as a kid with a new red wagon! We think it's as good as TRUE WEST —and we're mighty anxious to see what YOU think, so you skunk-stompers let us know, will you?

If FRONTIER TIMES isn't right there beside TRUE WEST, maybe it's covered up, someplace else on the stand, sold out (we're dreamers!), or they just flat don't carry it. If they do not handle FRONTIER TIMES, would you please stroke your handlebar mustache, quietly stroll over to the proprietor, kick him in the pants, and scream "Where's my FRONTIER TIMES?"

This approach is always very effective. It will:

1. **Scare his pants off.**
2. **Get you thrown out of his store.**
3. **Attract some cute young thing that you may wind up married to. (Ugh!)**
4. **Condition your singing voice.**
5. **Or, it just might get the man to stock FRONTIER TIMES . . .**

ACTUALLY, it is seldom ever the newsstand dealer's fault. He takes what the WHOLESALER brings him. So if the dealer explains that he didn't get any, ask him the name and phone number of the wholesaler and start phoning him. Ask your friends, neighbors, uncles, wives, boyfriends, milkmen, tax collectors, etc., to phone him too. He will probably travel all the way to Austin to shoot us for telling you this, but if there is really a demand for this magazine on the stands of your town, sometimes this is the only way to get it! WE'LL GIVE ANY WHOLESALER AS MANY COPIES AS HE ASKS FOR!

The wholesaler, poor fellow, has nearly as many troubles as we do. "We have too many magazines already!" he shouts with a touch of desperation in his voice. "Please, please—no more magazines!"

So you see the problem. The answer is in helping our friend see that it isn't quantity but quality that counts so that maybe he could throw out a couple of little titles like Saturday Morning Post and Readers Indigestion and make room for a really important title like FRONTIER TIMES. Crazy talk? Friend, you have to be a little bit crazy to stay in the publishing game these days!

Thanks a million! If you'll tell your friends it's on the stands, and WHAT stands, we'll sell this first issue out sure and may not even go broke in bringing out this new magazine!

★ DON'T MISS THIS FIRST ISSUE! ★

THE first four issues of TRUE WEST are gone. Two more become unavailable with this issue—Nos. 9 and 12. They'll all be going fast from now on. We have been offered $20.00 for one copy of an "all gone" issue already. So if you want to be sure to get this first issue of FRONTIER TIMES of the new series, fill in the blank below and get the job cinched now. TRUE WEST came out in 1953, and already the first four issues are very valuable. So make certain you start out right on FRONTIER TIMES.

If you can't find FRONTIER TIMES on your newsstands, then send in your subscription in a hurry and we'll start it with that FIRST ISSUE (illustrated on this page) so long as they last. We printed up a stack of extras but they're melting down like a ball of dew hit by a hot morning sun. In my estimation THE DONNER TRAGEDY alone is worth the price of that issue!

LOOK AT THIS LINE-UP FOR OUR FIRST ISSUE:

- THE DONNER TRAGEDY, by Sven Skaar. A nightmare of horror stalked members of the Donner Party from the day they left the Oregon-bound wagon train to follow the Hastings Cut-Off into California. What a story!
- CANYON OF THE SKELETONS, by Norman B. Wiltsey. The only instance where large Indian forces met in pitched battle. The Crows against the Sioux, Cheyennes, and Pawnees.
- GENTLEMAN KILLER, by J. Frank Dobie
- THE BLIZZARD, by Walt Coburn
- THE FIGHT THAT FINISHED TOMBSTONE, by Tom Bailey
- THEY COULD LAUGH AT DEATH, by T. Walt Hogan
- "THE FIGHTIN'EST RANGER," by Eugene Cunningham
- WELLS FARGO'S GOLD BOAT, by Richard H. Dillon
- THE LAST OWL-HOOT, by Eric Thane
- DEATH VALLEY SILVER, by Clarence E. Wager

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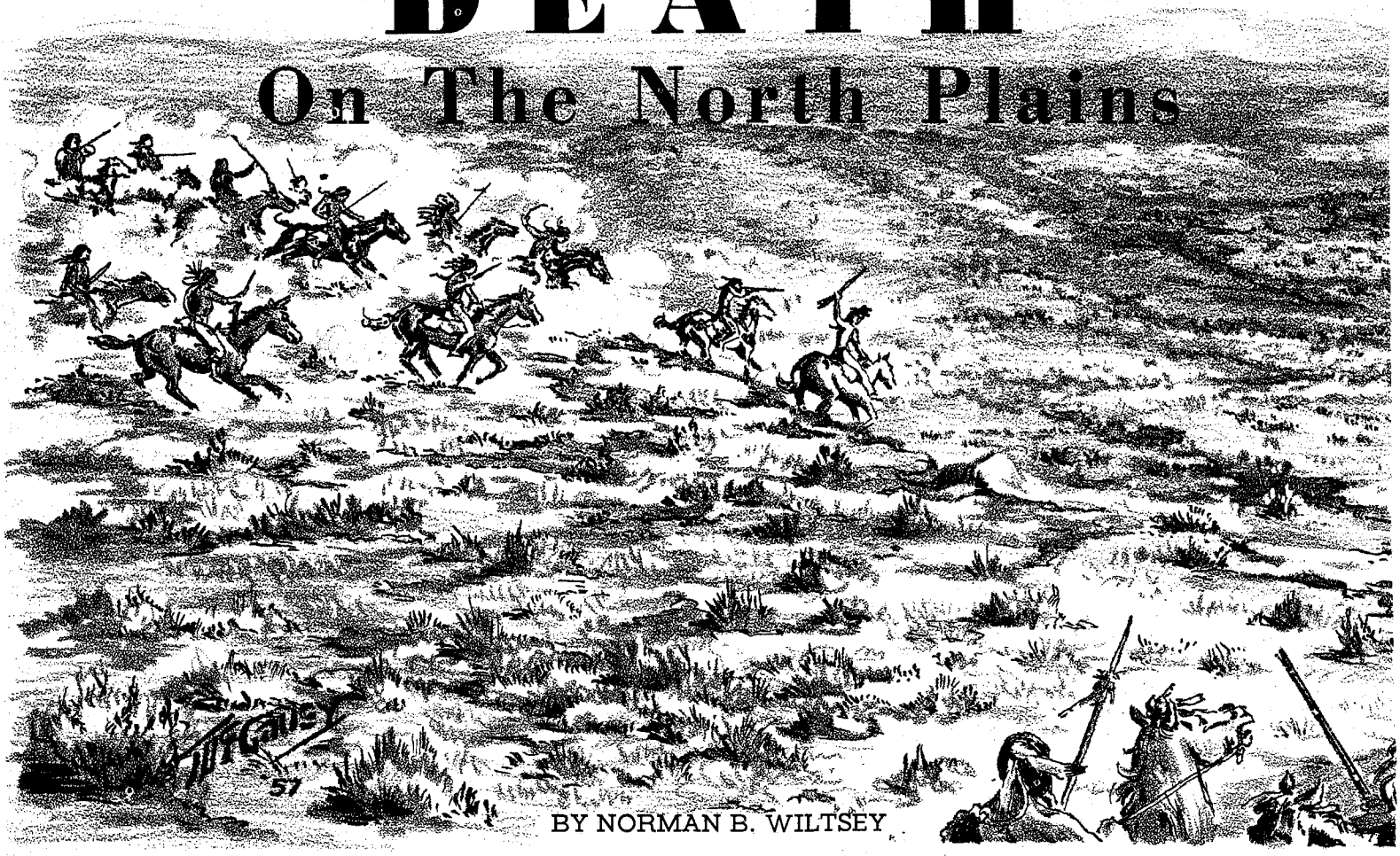
DEATH On The North Plains



BY NORMAN B. WILTSEY

SYNOPSIS:

The Sioux Nation, most powerful of all the Plains tribes, was the last of the northern Indian tribes of the West to seriously challenge the armed might of the white conquerors. Roaming the remote North Plains in summer and wintering far back from encroaching civilization, the Sioux avoided an all-out clash with the whites until gold was discovered in Montana in the early 1860's. A road was built straight through the Sioux hunting grounds in Wyoming to connect with the gold fields, and forts were erected to protect the road. Parleys failing, the Sioux under Red Cloud and Crazy Horse harassed the forts and stopped all travel on the road. The hostiles' attack on Fort Kearney and the destruction of Captain Fetterman and his command sparked the public's demand that the Government put an end to the fighting. The Government finally acceded to Red Cloud's demand that the "thieves' road" be closed and the forts abandoned. "Red Cloud's War" officially ended when the chief rode into Fort Laramie on November 6, 1868, and "touched the pen" to the treaty.

WITHIN a few months after Red Cloud signed the Treaty of Laramie the Oglala leader had ample proof that the white men had no more intention of keeping their share of the bargain than they had in treaties of the past. On November 27 of 1868, Colonel George Armstrong Custer's Seventh Cavalry, spearheaded by Major Frank North's Pawnee Scouts, attacked the unguarded Cheyenne village of Chief Black Kettle on the Washita. The surprise attack was completely successful. Black Kettle and 103 of his warriors, together with a number of women and children, were killed. Eight hundred and seventy-five ponies were captured and shot, and this blow broke the spirit of the Cheyennes. The survivors fled afoot through bitter-cold weather to Red River, west of the Washita Mountains. Custer's loss in men and officers was small, and the doughty cavalry officer was acclaimed the hero of the hour.

In February, 1869, in direct violation of the terms of the Laramie Treaty, the War Department issued an order forbidding the Indians to hunt outside the limits of the Reservation. The military position, as stated by the War Department, was this: "Outside the well-defined limits of their reservations they (the Indians) are under the original and exclusive control of the military, and as a rule will be considered hostile."

Still, Red Cloud clung faithfully to his pledged word and remained at peace with the white men. Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, the leaders of the roving, hunting Sioux, had flatly refused to sign the white man's "lying paper," and now their refusal was justified by the facts. The famous medicine man and "old man chief" of the Hunkpapas, and the fiery young fighting leader of the Oglalas renewed their vows never to accept the white man's gifts nor swallow his glib lies.

The early 1870's on the North Plains were years of uneasy peace broken occasionally by sharp skirmishes between the troops and the Sioux and Cheyennes. General Philip Sheridan, Commander of the Department of the Missouri, conceived the idea of sending a military reconnoitering expedition into the Black Hills, the sacred *Paha Sapa* of the Sioux. Lieutenant Colonel Custer was picked to lead the expedition. Ostensibly, the purpose of the mission was to obtain accurate information on the trails of the Sioux. Actually, since several scientists went along with the troops, there seems little doubt that the main objective was to seek out the mineral wealth and other natural resources of the Hills. Whatever the reasons, the invasion of *Paha Sapa* was a flagrant violation of the terms of the Laramie Treaty of 1868.

Custer left Fort Lincoln with 1200 men on July 1, 1874, with his regimental band playing "Garryowen," the marching song of the Seventh Cavalry. The long column moved southwest to the Belle Fourche Valley 290 miles away, arriving there on July 18. Overruling his scouts' objections, Custer proceeded boldly up the valley of the Red Water along a clearly defined Indian trail.

On July 22, the expedition camped on Spring Creek, in a lovely, flower-filled valley that Custer promptly named Floral Valley. Two weeks were spent in this wild, beautiful region, exploring the country and searching for minerals.

On August 2, Custer sent the white scout "Lonesome Charley" Reynolds back to Fort Laramie with his glowing report on the Black Hills. In his dispatch, the Colonel mentioned in fascinating detail the rich soil, the fine water, the many varieties of wild game, fruits, and flowers. Most intriguing of all, he mentioned *gold!*

"Gold has been found at several places and it is the belief of those who are giv-

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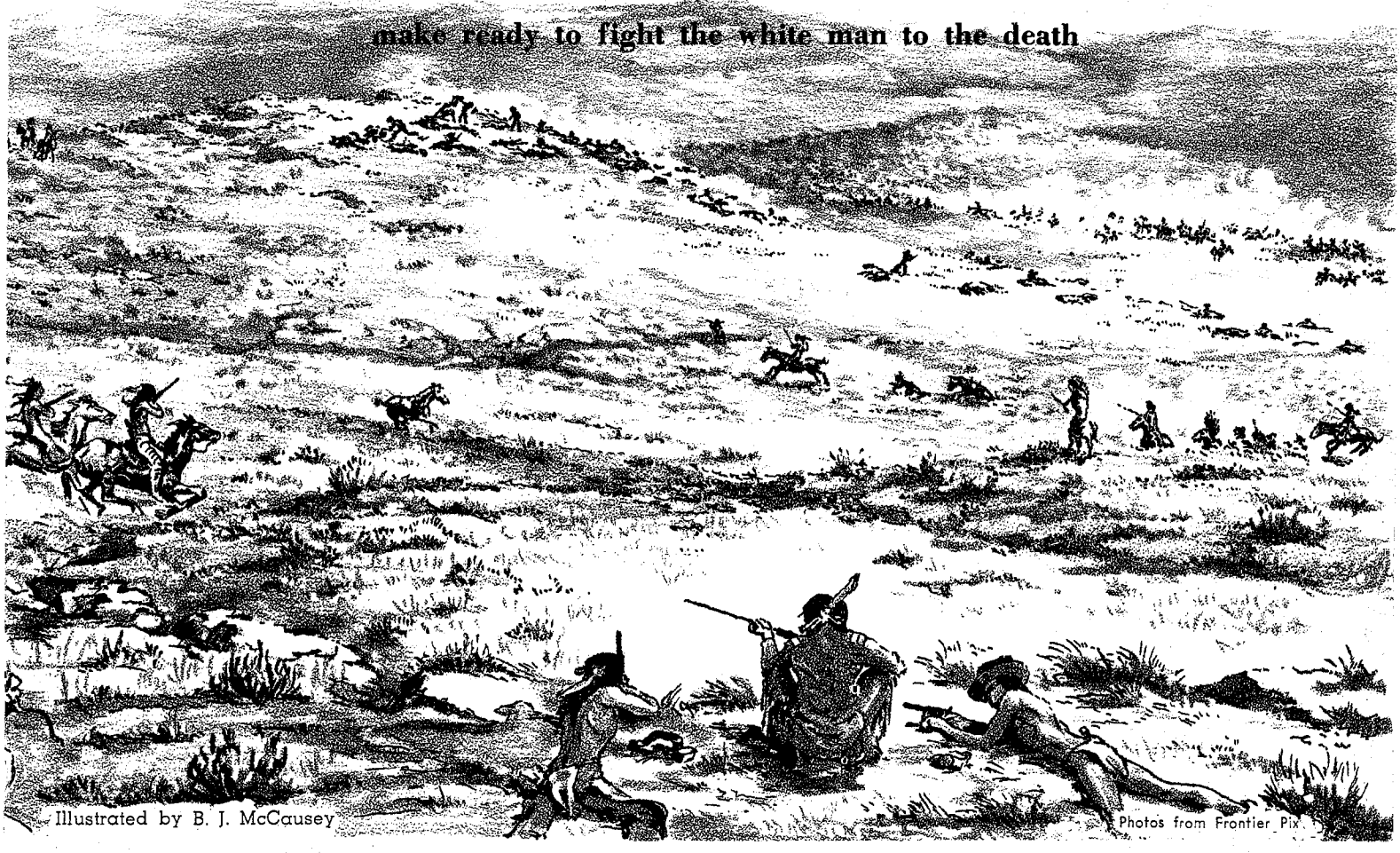
Custer invades the Black Hills and the allied tribes make ready to fight the white man to the death



Illustrated by B. J. McCausey

Photos from Frontier Pix

ing their attention to this subject that it will be found in paying quantities," wrote Custer . . . "Veins of what the geologists term gold-bearing quartz crop out on almost every hillside . . . a hole was dug eight feet in depth, the miners report that they found gold among the roots of the grass . . ."

Custer's report on the Black Hills, while directed to military headquarters at St. Paul, was given to the press on August 12. The effect on the public was electric. To a nation still suffering from the sharp depression of 1873, the news of gold in the Black Hills was a tonic—a shot in the arm. The big newspapers of the East trumpeted Custer's report under banner headlines: GOLD FOUND IN THE BLACK HILLS! Men who didn't know a gold-pan from a pickax read the papers and sold everything they possessed just to get transportation to the goldfields. Outfits? Equipment? Who needed equipment when you could pick the gold from the grass roots with your bare hands!

Then, just as the hopes of the people were at fever heat, came bitter disappointment. On August 16, General Sheridan wired to General Terry, military commander in the Dakota area, absolutely prohibiting all white persons from entering the Black Hills. Acting in accordance with Sheridan's orders, Terry stationed soldiers along the Missouri River and the Platte to arrest any white men attempting to enter the Indian country. Wagons and outfits were seized and destroyed. A few rugged adventurers slipped past the cordon of troops and got into the Black Hills. Several of these hardy ones did find gold and got out of the forbidden mountains with full pokes and fantastic stories of the riches to be found there. Others were never seen again and were presumed to have been killed by the Sioux. The remainder were found by military patrols and forcibly ejected.

On the whole, the Sioux behaved remarkably well in the trying circumstances. The young braves were all for killing every white man who set his foot on the sacred soil of *Paha Sapa,* but the chiefs counselled patience. The Great Father in Washington pledged that the gold-hunters would be kept out until a fair and satisfactory treaty could be arranged for the purchase of the Hills. Chiefs Red Cloud and Spotted Tail agreed to this, but the irreconcilable Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull would have none of it. "The Black Hills belong to the Sioux, now and forever," said Sitting Bull. "If the whites try to take them, I will fight!"

YET the powerful medicine man of the Hunkpapas and the brooding "Strange Man" of the Oglalas did nothing to stop the Government's investigation of the mineral wealth and natural resources of the Black Hills in the summer of 1875. Professor W. P. Jenney, escorted by more than 400 soldiers under the command of Lieutenant Richard I. Dodge, spent nearly five months in the Hills, returning to Fort Laramie on October 24. The noted geologist's report, while phrased in carefully conservative sentences, left little doubt that there was indeed gold in the Black Hills.

In mid-September, 1875, a council was held between whites and Indians at White River, eight miles from Red Cloud Agency, to negotiate for Government purchase of the Black Hills. The government Commission consisted of W. B. Allison, A. H. Terry, A. Comingo, S. D. Hinman, G. P. Beaubias, A. G. Lawrence, and W. H. Ashley. The seven Commissioners, after considerable discussion of the matter among themselves, decided to attempt to buy the right to mine only in the Black Hills rather than to hold out for a full relinquishment of title.

Representatives of all the branches of the far-flung Sioux Nation were in attendance at the council: Oglalas, Hunkpapas, Minniconjous, Brules, Blackfeet, Two Kettles, Sans Arcs, Yanktons, and Santees. There were also a number of Northern Cheyennes and Arapahoes.

William Allison, chairman of the Commission, opened the council on the morning of September 20th by coming straight to the matter at hand: "We have come now to ask you if you are willing to give our people the right to mine in the Black Hills as long as gold or other valuable metals are found, for a fair and just sum. When the gold or other valuable minerals are taken away, the country will again be yours to dispose of in any manner you may wish. If you will sell us this right, we suggest as the proper eastern boundary the point where the north and south Cheyenne come together, and that we take for mining uses all the country lying between the rivers, thus uniting as far west as the 104th meridian west of Greenwich, which will be about the line of the high limestone ridge in the west of the Hills."

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Members of the Seventh Cavalry at Fort Lincoln, Dakota Territory, 1874. Pictured are: (3) Gen. George A. Custer, (6) Mrs. George A. Custer, (10) Mrs. James Calhoun, (12) Lt. C. A. Varnum, (13) Col. Tom Custer, and (16) Lt. James Calhoun.

After this opening statement, Allison withdrew to allow the Indians time to consult and to prepare their answer. It quickly became apparent that the Sioux were divided into two factions on the situation. One party, headed by canny Spotted Tail, wanted to sell the Hills. Another group, composed mostly of young warriors, spoke fiercely against selling the sacred mountains at any price.

Days passed and the wrangling continued. On September 27, when the council met again, it was discovered that more than half of the Indians had left for their homes in anger and disgust.

SPOTTED TAIL, who had possessed the foresight to check with Professor Jenney on the mineral wealth of the Hills, stated simply: "As long as we live on this earth we will expect pay. We want to leave the amount with the President at interest forever. I want to live on the interest of my money. The amount must be so large that the interest will support us."

Spotted Bear put it still more bluntly: "Our Great Father has a big safe and so have we. This hill is our safe. We want $70,000,000 for the Black Hills."

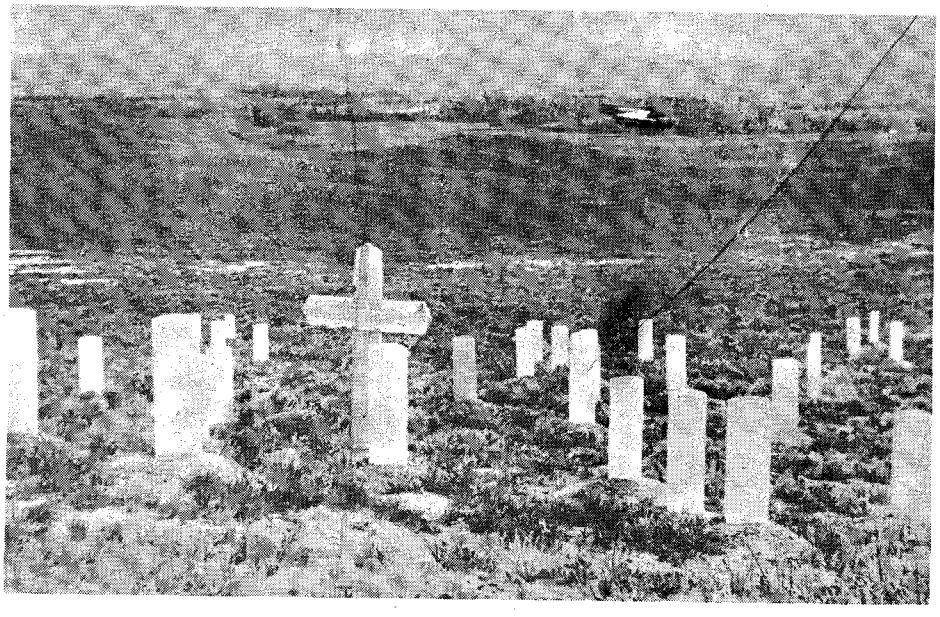
Red Dog announced that he was willing to sell the right to mine the Black Hills if the Government would promise to support seven generations yet unborn.

Red Cloud, as was expected, made the longest speech of all. The imposing Oglala Chief, known as *Mahapiya-Luta* to his people, summed up his demands in careful detail: "We have much small game yet that we can depend on for the future. I want the Great Father to buy guns and ammunition, so we can shoot the game. For seven generations to come I want the Great Father to give us Texas steers for our meat. I want the Government to issue for me hereafter flour and coffee, and sugar and tea, and bacon, and beans and rice and dried apples, and saleratus and tobacco, and soap and salt and pepper for the old people. I want a wagon, a light wagon, and a span of horses and six yoke of working cattle for my people. I want a sow and a boar, and a cow and a bull, and a sheep and a ram, and a hen and a cock for each family."

At this point in his speech, Red Cloud drew himself up proudly and stared straight at Allison: "I am an Indian, but you try to make a white man out of me. I want some white men's houses at this Agency to be built for the Indians. I have been into white people's houses and I have seen nice black bedsteads and chairs, and I want that kind of furniture given to my people. I thought I had some interest in this sawmill here, but I find I have not. I want the Great Father to furnish me a sawmill which I may call my own. I want a mower and a scythe for my people. Maybe you white people think I ask too much from the Government, but I think those hills extend clear to the sky, maybe they go above the sky, and that is the reason I ask for so much. I think the Black Hills are worth more than all the wild beasts and all the tame beasts in the possession of the white people. I know it well, and you can see it plain enough, that God Almighty placed those hills here for my wealth, but now you want to take them from me and make me poor, so I ask so much that I won't be poor. Now I will tell you how much country I give you. Around the Hills is a race track (here Red Cloud referred to the valley which encircles the main body of the Hills) and I sell to the Government inside of that trail."

On the next day, at Spotted Tail's request, the Commission submitted to the Indians their counter proposition. Boil-

Original graves of the brave soldiers killed in the Battle of the Little Big Horn, 1876. A cross marks the resting place of Gen. George A. Custer.



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Gen. George A. Custer and Staff. Photo taken on the scientific expedition into the Black Hills in 1874.

ed down to essentials, the Commission's proposal was this: The Government would buy the license to mine and the right to grow stock and cultivate the soil in the Hills area previously designated at an annual rental of $400,000, the Government having the right to terminate the lease at any time by giving two years' notice. For the outright purchase of the Hills, the Government could offer $6,000,000, no more. As a side issue, the Government wished also to buy the Big Horn country at $50,000 a year, payable in cows and farming tools.

The Indians flatly refused all three propositions. The council broke up the next day, and the Commission reported that any settlement seemed impossible of achievement as the Indians placed upon the Hills "a value far beyond any sum that could possibly be considered by the Government."

The results of this failure by the Commission were far-reaching and immediate. Troops were withdrawn from the borders of the Black Hills, and miners poured in by the thousands. Gold camps sprang up along the creeks, more than 10,000 miners congregating in Custer City alone by the following winter of 1875-76. And far back in the hidden valleys of sacred *Paha Sapa,* in the camps of Crazy Horse and Gall, Black Moon and Sitting Bull, the council drums began to beat.

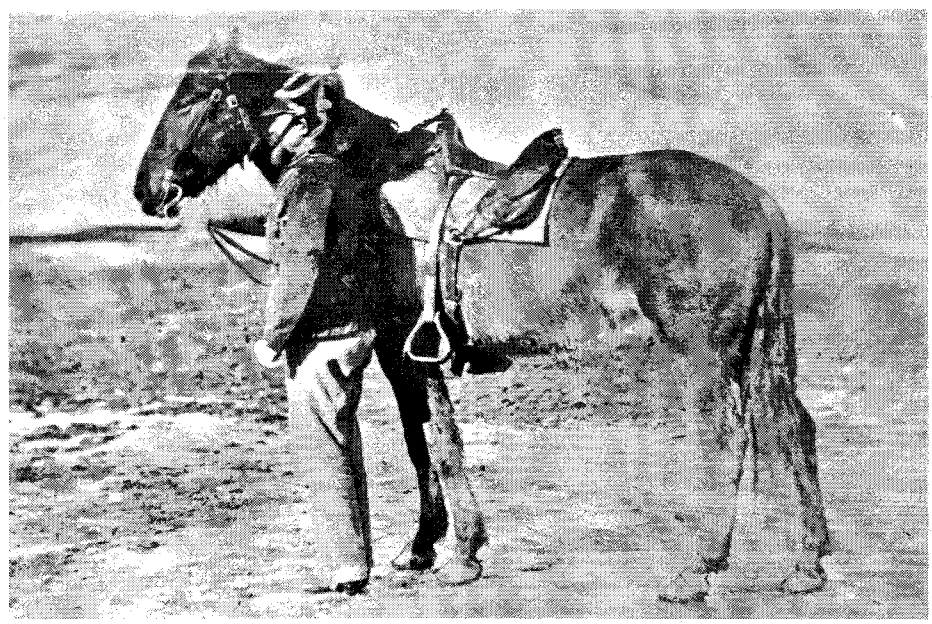
THE early winter of 1875-76 was bitterly cold, with blizzard after blizzard sweeping the high plains. Food was scarce at the Sioux Agencies and hundreds of hungry Indians left the reservation to hunt buffalo in the unceded territory along the Powder River.

Under treaty conditions they had a perfect right to do this; furthermore, they did so with the full knowledge and permission of the Agents. Yet, on December 3, 1875, the Honorable Z. Chandler, Secretary of the Interior, sent an official message to the Honorable E. P. Smith, Commissioner of Indian Affairs: "Referring to our communication of the 27th ultimo, relative to the status of certain Sioux Indians residing without the bounds of their reservation and their continued hostile attitude toward the whites, I have to request that you direct the Indian Agents at all Sioux Agencies in Dakota and at Fort Peck, Montana, to notify said Indians that unless they shall remove within the bounds of their reservation (and remain there) before the thirty-first of January next, they shall be deemed hostile and treated accordingly by the military force."

In view of the severe weather conditions and the distance of the Sioux camps from the Agencies, this order had to be one of two things: a gross error of judgment, or a deliberate attempt to "set up" the Sioux for a winter campaign launched by the Army. The exercise of ordinary horse sense should have informed the worthy officials that it was physically impossible for the Sioux to come in hundreds of miles from their far-flung camps in the short time specified. Warriors alone could have made it, but to drag women and children along on such a forced march would have been not only stupid but suicidal. The Sioux refused to be conned into making the attempt. In fact, several camps did not receive the order, since not all the messengers sent out made it through the deep snow and howling storms.

Promptly on February 1, 1876, "war" was declared on the "hostile" Sioux who had not obeyed the Great Father's imperious mandate. A punitive expedition was formed on the Missouri to move against the Indians on the Powder River. Officers in charge of the operation discovered that it was impossible to march because of the deep snow and extreme cold.

Col. Keogh's horse, "Comanche," sole survivor of the Battle of the Little Big Horn.



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The expedition was hurriedly called off, but the declaration of "war" stood.

The winter campaign against the Sioux stalled for a month, despite General Sheridan's orders to General Crook to get the job done at once. Crook, a cautious, methodical commander, took his time assembling a strong force of 800 men. Finally, on March 1, the canny "Three Stars" (as Crook was known to the Indians from the insignia of his rank) marched up the old Bozeman Trail to hunt the hostiles.

Past the abandoned Forts Reno and Phil Kearney moved the troops, thence northeast to the Tongue River. Finding nary a sign of Sioux, hostile or otherwise, Crook turned southeast to Powder River. Near Otter Creek, Crook's scouts discovered pony tracks. The General went into camp and called a conference of his officers to discuss the situation.

FRANK GROUARD, Crook's chief of scouts, advanced the logical opinion that the pony tracks would lead to a Sioux village. Agreeing with this astute deduction, the General detailed Colonel J. J. Reynolds, with six companies of cavalry, to trail the Indians and attack their village. The troops shoved off on the night of March 16, hunched and miserable in their saddles in the 40 degrees below zero cold. Grouard, known as "Grabber" to the Sioux, led the way on foot.

At daybreak the scout spotted the village, more than a hundred *tipis,* in a bottom near Powder River. Grouard, who had once been captured by the Sioux and had learned to speak their language, crawled close to the camp and listened to the camp crier crying out the news that troops had been sighted the day before. The scout thought he recognized the camp as that of Crazy Horse because of the horses. Actually the camp was composed mostly of Cheyennes, under Chief Two Moons. There were also a few Oglala *tipis,* but Crazy Horse was not present.

Informed by Grouard of the proximity of the unguarded Indian village, Reynolds moved to the attack. The scout, mindful of the fact that the Oglalas—with whom he had formerly lived—would be infuriated by his treachery, fled to the safety of the hills.

Captain Egan's company led the assault, firing point-blank into the lodges where most of the Indians were still asleep. The women, shrieking in terror, fled to the bluffs carrying the smaller children. Warriors grabbed bows and guns and rushed out to battle the troops. Not until Captain Mills charged up with reinforcements did the outnumbered braves surrender the village. Four troopers were killed, six wounded, in the sharp clash. The Indian loss was slight: one man killed, one squaw wounded, and a blind squaw taken captive.

Colonel Reynolds had captured the village, 700 horses, and plenty of buffalo meat and robes. His hard-fighting troopers had driven the Indians into the hills, but they were close to exhaustion and in no condition to follow up their victory. Inexperienced in Indian warfare, Reynolds pondered his next move.

A seasoned Indian fighter would have shot the captured horses, placed a heavy guard around the camp, and allowed his tired, hungry men to eat and sleep by turns in the warm lodges until their strength returned. Reynolds burned the camp with all the food, ordered his half-dozen scouts to bring along the huge Indian pony herd, and started the long, cold trek back to Crook's camp with barely a day's rations for his troops.

Promptly the Sioux and Cheyennes, lurking in the hills like a swarm of dislodged hornets, swept down and recovered their horses. Emboldened by success, they amused themselves by harrying the fleeing troops for a time—then pushed on to run off Crook's entire beef herd.

CAPTAIN JOHN G. BOURKE, in his book *On the Border with Crook,* writes with characteristic bluntness of the fiasco: "We had no beef, as our herd had been run off on account of the failure to guard it; we were out of supplies, although we had destroyed enough to last a regiment for a couple of months; we were encumbered with sick, wounded, and crippled from frozen limbs, because we had not sense enough to save the furs and robes in the village."

Furious with anger, General Crook arrested Colonel Reynolds and later filed charges against him. The half-frozen troops were lucky to get back to their post alive. Reynolds was court-martialed for the debacle.

Nothing the white men might have done could have been more effective in uniting the tribes against them than this bungled winter campaign. The Cheyennes, peaceful since the signing of the Laramie Treaty in 1868, had borne the brunt of Reynolds' attack. They had not been included in the Government order to return to their reservation; yet their village, horses, and winter food supply had been destroyed. Now it was time to join with the Sioux and wipe the soldiers from the prairie!

Accordingly, the outraged Cheyennes moved first to Crazy Horse's village beyond the Powder River, where they were fed and clothed. The young Oglala leader listened in silence to their tale of horror,

With his lacerated arms covered with blood, Sitting Bull danced the Sun-gazing Dance.

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then raised his hand and spoke: "Brothers, the time has come for us to fight. There is a limit to what men can stand —and we have passed that limit. You will rest for two sleeps, and then you will go to the camp of Sitting Bull on Beaver Creek and tell him what you have told me. He will help you. He will call a council of all the chiefs to make our plans to fight the whites."

So it happened. Messengers traveled to the far camps of the hunting Indians of the three allied tribes: Sioux, Cheyennes, and Arapahoes. Others rode to every Agency west of the Missouri to whisper the news: "It is war with the soldiers. Sitting Bull asks you all to come to his camp at the Big Bend of the Rosebud. It is war!"

Despairingly, old Red Cloud warned his people of disaster, but they would not listen. Red Cloud had been to Washington and New York, had seen the white men "swarming like bees" on the streets of their big cities, and knew that resistance was hopeless. But many of his young men refused to listen; they rode to join Sitting Bull. With them rode his own son, eighteen-year-old Jack Red Cloud, carrying the silver-mounted rifle his father was given in Washington.

By the hundreds they came to the great camp on the Rosebud: Crazy Horse and his Oglalas; Hump and Fast Bull with the Minniconjous; Spotted Eagle with the Sans Arcs; Gall and Crow King and Black Moon of the Hunkpapas; Brules, Yanktonais, Santees, Two Kettles, and Blackfoot Sioux. The Cheyennes came, too, and a few lodges of Arapahoes.

THE COUNCIL began with the ceremonial naming of leaders for the big fight to come. The Cheyennes named Two Moons, whose warriors had fought Reynolds and Crook. The Sioux elected Sitting Bull. Each tribal division would serve under its own leader, under the general direction of these two chiefs. The Oglalas, for example, named Crazy Horse as their war chief.

No definite plans were made to attack the white soldiers; it was generally agreed that the soldiers would soon come to find them. In preparation for battle, Sitting Bull sent out small parties of warriors to gather up all the guns and ammunition and horses they could find. Mining camps in the Black Hills were attacked by these roving war parties. Every gun and horse secured in these raids was brought back to the big allied village moving slowly along the Rosebud.

In June of 1876 a great Sun Dance was held on the west bank of the Rosebud, a ceremony thereafter to be known as "Sitting Bull's Sun Dance." Here he gave "one hundred pieces of flesh" (skin) from his arms as an offering to *Wakan Tanka*. Here, with his lacerated arms covered with blood, he danced the Sun-gazing Dance, staring into the fiery heart of the Sun and praying fervently for help and guidance for his people in their hour of great peril.

All one day Sitting Bull danced and all that night and on until noon of the next day. At last, when he was so weak he could hardly stand, two chiefs came to his side and carried him to the shade of a lodge, where they laid him on the ground. He was almost unconscious and cold water was dashed into his face to revive him. He awoke at once and spoke hoarsely of the vision he had had—a vision of soldiers and Indians coming down out of the sky like grasshoppers, with their heads down and their hats falling off. They fell right into camp, and a Voice had said: *"I give you these because they have no ears."*

These were the words of *Wakan Tanka,* meaning that the white men who had no ears to listen to truth were about to attack. And the symbolic meaning of their falling into camp upside down meant that they would be killed.

The Sun Dance ended on this solemn note on June 14. Two days later General Crook entered the valley of the Rosebud with more than 1300 men. The war was about to begin.

GENERAL CROOK'S march to the Rosebud was part of a projected three-pronged offensive planned by Commander-in-Chief Sheridan. One column, under Crook, advanced from Fort Fetterman upon the Sioux from the south; another column, commanded by General Gibbon, was to move from Fort Ellis in Montana from the northwest; a third column, led by General Terry, was ordered to strike from Fort Lincoln in the northeast. This was the classic military pincers movement, designed to catch and crack the massed warriors of the three allied tribes between the jaws of a giant nutcracker. Perfectly synchronized, such a movement might very well have swiftly accomplished its objective. In the rough terrain of the North Plains, such meticulous synchronization was virtually impossible. Crook contacted the hostiles first—and quickly found that he had run into a buzzsaw.

The graybearded General considered that his force of 1100 troops and 260 Indian scouts—Crows, Shoshones, and Rees—was sufficient to destroy any hostiles that dared oppose him. Against him the allied tribes could rally less than one thousand warriors, of which about half had guns. There was, however, one significant advantage with the red allies; they were led by the fighting genius of the Oglalas', Crazy Horse.

The Battle of the Rosebud was notable for General Crook's weird delusion that Crazy Horse's village lay at the other end of the valley, six miles away. There was no such village, but early in the fight Crook sent Captain Mills with eight troops of cavalry down the valley in search of it. The Sioux let Mills through their lines practically unopposed, then concentrated their attack upon Crook's depleted force. The battle raged all that day of June 17, 1876, on both banks of the Rosebud, and the astounded General saw his best troopers hammered back in charge after charge by the enemy. Crook had never seen Indians fight with such savage determination. Every warrior, it seemed, was eager to count *coup* in hand-to-hand combat with the soldiers. Crazy Horse was everywhere, leading his fierce Oglalas on his pinto war horse, shouting his battle cry: "Follow me, follow me—this is a good day to die! *Hoka hey!*" And all the Lakotas followed the charging Oglalas, roaring out like a great wind: "This is a good day to die! *Hoka hey!*"

But when night was near, only eight warriors of the allied tribes had been

(Continued on page 34)

Left: Chief Sitting Bull. Center: Major Marcus A. Reno, Seventh Cavalry. Right: "Gall," famous Sioux Chief and leader against Custer at Little Big Horn in 1876.

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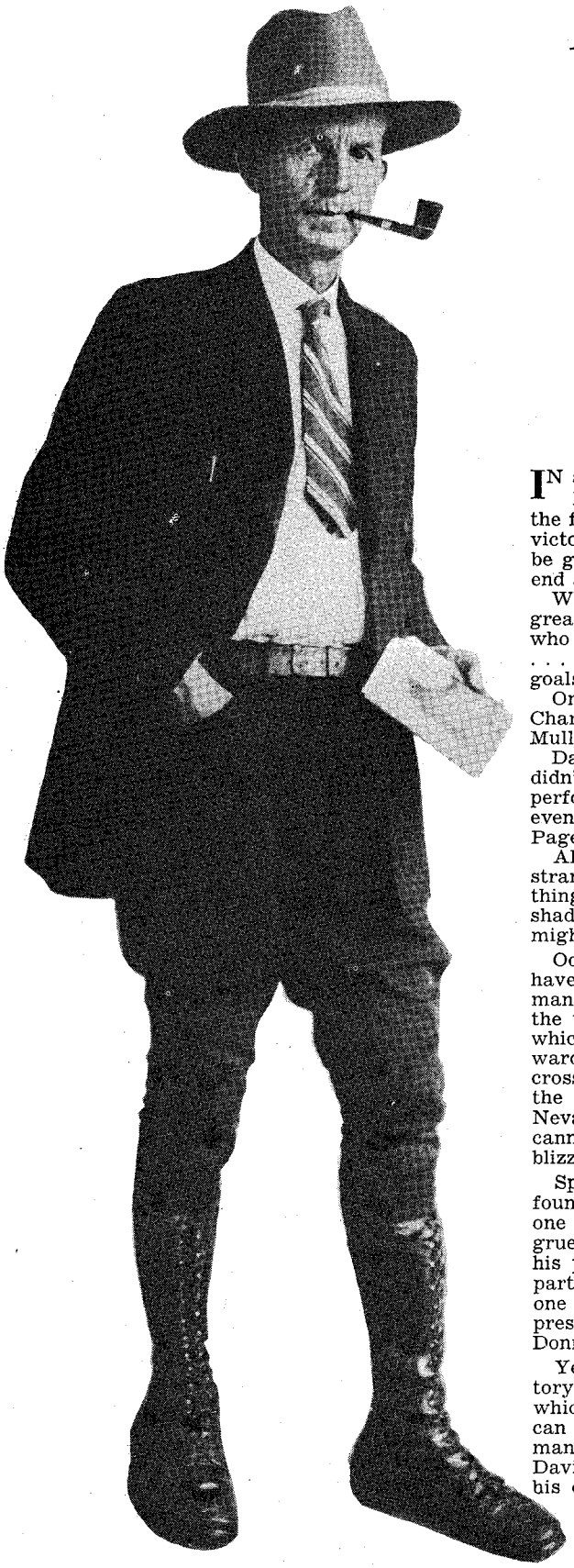
The last tragic victim of the Donner Trail was the

Mystery Man of Mullet Island

BY NELL MURBARGER

Photos from the Author



IN a more charitable age to come, this hero-exalting world may recognize the fact that not all laurels belong to the victors—that a few merit badges should be given for honest effort, regardless of end achieved.

When that time comes, it will be a great day for God's gallants—the men who fight and live and die for a cause . . . and even in death fail to gain their goals.

One of these unsung crusaders was Charles E. Davis, the Mystery Man of Mullet Island.

Davis was not an important hero. He didn't lead any armies to glory; he didn't perform any rousing deeds at sea, or even pull any fast tricks to gain him a Page One picture in the tabs.

All he did was hitch his wagon to a strange obsession, and sacrifice everything he owned—life included—that one shadowy episode in frontier history might be better understood.

Oddly enough, there doesn't appear to have been one tangible reason why this man should have turned his attention to the tragic Donner-Reed emigrant party, which, 80 years earlier, had toiled Westward from Independence, Missouri, across the grim barrier of the Rockies and the parched salt deserts of Utah and Nevada, to a rendezvous with starvation, cannibalism, and death in the roaring blizzards of the Sierra Summits.

Sponsored by no historical society, foundation or museum, he received not one penny of reimbursement for his grueling years of field research. None of his people, so far as known, had taken part in that historic fiasco, nor does anyone seem to recall that Davis had expressed previously any interest in the Donner trek.

Yet, this was the single episode in history he chose for his research . . . all of which only goes to prove that no one can fathom the workings of another man's mind—particularly a man like Davis, who lived in a strange world of his own, and so conducted himself that even close acquaintances never had the feeling of knowing him intimately.

MY own recollections of Davis stem from the middle 1920's, when I was a teen-ager and he was nudging the half-century mark. I remember him as a sharp-eyed saturnine chap, hawk-faced, dark complexioned, thin as a sapling, and nearly seven feet tall—a man who wore his clothes well and carried himself with military erectness.

Classifying him in the manner of an amateur psychologist, I would say he had been a man unmercifully torn between conflicting personalities.

According to the Brass Rail Biographers of Niland and Brawley, Charles Davis had been born in Massachusetts, of wealthy parentage, and had been reared in a fine home where colored servants did the work, and little boys wore short velvet trousers, and were schooled in the social graces.

On the Davis family tree, however, had grown other fruit than the plums of Back Bay aristocracy.

Deep in the roots of that tree had lain a strong, dark strain of Indian blood.

This, I suspect, was the joker in Charlie Davis's deck of cards.

Throughout his boyhood, this mixture of blue blood and savage had waged a continual battle for his soul; and when the time had come for choosing a life profession acceptable to his family, the black sheep of the Back Bay had kicked over the apple cart.

With all the family portraits rocking in horror, Charles Davis had turned his back on wealth and home and social position, and at the age of 16 years, had signed on as an ordinary seaman in Sol Jacobs' Atlantic fishing fleet. Here, at last, was a life to his liking and he had made the most of it—applying himself to his duties so assiduously that by his eighteenth birthday he had earned his master's papers and the rating of captain.

Captain Charles E. Davis, Mystery Man of Mullet Island.

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Quitting the sea in the closing years of the 19th century, Davis had wandered West, and in 1898 had joined the gold stampede to the Klondike. Two years later he had reappeared in Texas, and another five years found him building a home on the flank of a dead volcano, in what is now Imperial County, California.

It is almost impossible to imagine a homesite more forbidding than this place chosen by the former New Englander. Spreading away to the south and east lay a blubbering hell of hissing geysers and boiling mudpots. For forty miles to the north stretched the barren, alkaline waste of Salton Sink—the parched skeleton of an ancient sea that had passed into oblivion hundreds of years before—and overhead hung a merciless sun that sent summer temperatures soaring to 130 degrees in the shade.

Barely had Davis anchored his roots in the new location before the Colorado River let loose its banks and began pouring all its muddy fury into that salt-encrusted sink, thereby turning the old lake bed into the present Salton Sea. In the course of that transformation, Davis's volcanic butte was cut off from other land, and time would find that nubbin of earth known as Mullet Island.

ON this small, bare, sun-parched knoll, that nobody else wanted, Davis built a home which he aptly named "Hell's Kitchen"—and went on to establish there a boat landing, cafe, and dancehall. For the next twenty years he prepared and served "shore" dinners, emceed his dances, and rented boats to fishermen and duck hunters. Seining the mullet fish that had come to inhabit the Salton Sea, he cured them in a homemade smokehouse and hauled them to Los Angeles, where he set up a sidewalk stand at 8th and Broadway, gave free samples to passersby, and dared the authorities to stop him from selling his product. In his spare time "The Captain," as he liked to be known, served as game warden, fought for conservation of natural resources, and made a scientific study of the mudpots and geysers flanking his home.

These details I have cited only to show that a reasonable pattern of normalcy ran through this man, who in 1927, at the age of 50 years, suddenly snapped a padlock on the prosperous business he had labored to build, took French leave of his home and community position, withdrew his life's savings, and turned his full attention to retracing and staking every mile of the Donner-Reed Trail from Independence, Missouri to Fort Sutter, California—a distance of 2,000 miles. In re-blazing this route, it was the avowed intention of Davis to locate every overnight camp made by the wagon train, and to establish positive identification of every unmarked grave left along that tragedy-stalked way!

It would have been a terrific undertaking for even a man in the prime of life . . . and Charles Davis had already passed that point.

"I never met Davis, personally, but I came to know him by reputation when I traced the Utah-Nevada portion of the Donner Trail in 1929-30," said Charles Kelly, lifelong student of Western history and the author of several volumes dealing with that subject. "I had barely started gathering material for my book, *Salt Desert Trails,* when old desert rats began telling me of the incredible exploits of this man who had preceded me over the trail two years earlier."

According to these informants who had worked with him in the field, Davis had been possessed of an uncanny ability for locating sand-buried relics—an aptitude so pronounced that at times it seemed almost as if some shadowy corner of his subconscious self must have *actual knowledge* of where those pieces had been cast aside when weakening and dying oxen made necessary the abandonment of yet another wagon.

For example, Davis had interviewed a grandson of Lewis Keseberg, (a prominent member of the Donner party) who had told Davis that while his grandfather was chopping firewood from the top of a pine tree that protruded above the mountainous Sierra snows in that winter of 1846-47, he had had the misfortune to drop his axe into a hole formed in the snow around the hole of the tree. Peering down the length of the trunk, he could see the tool lodged in the fork of a branch, but in his weakened condition had not attempted to retrieve it.

THE story had been told to Davis simply as a means of illustrating the depth of that season's snow; but upon visiting the site of the Donner winter camp, Davis walked straight through the forest to the tree holding that axehead—still fixed in the high crotch where it had lodged 80 years before! With the bark of the tree grown almost completely over the blade, there seemed little question but this was the Keseberg axe.

The first few times that Davis was responsible for discoveries of this sort, his feats were passed over as "coincidences" and "luck" . . . But when such exploits become a run-of-the-mill program, folks began looking strangely at one another and asking themselves, *"How does this man know where these incidents occurred?"*

Time and again, that strange skill was demonstrated as Davis located one after another of the campsites occupied by the Donner party, eight decades before.

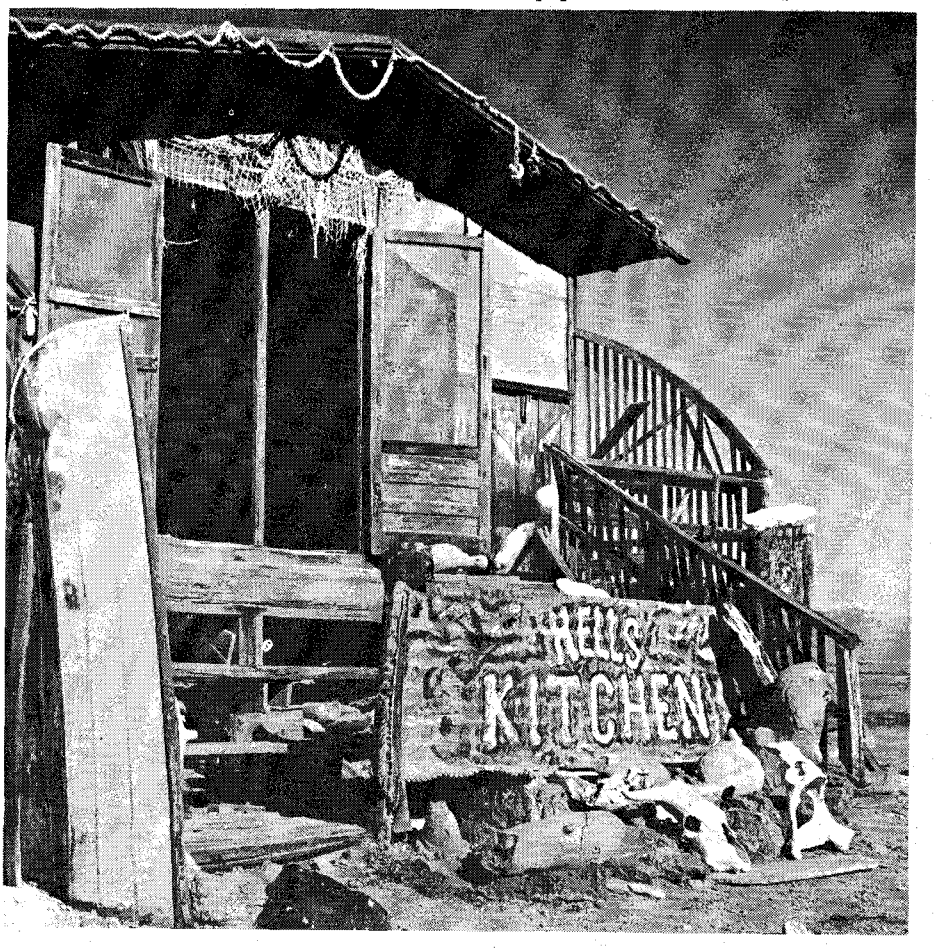
Nearing a point of the desert where it seemed logical to him that a camp must have been made (as determined by mileage records, availability of water, and possible mention of landmarks) Davis would crawl over the area on his hands and knees, sniffing at the ground like a dog trying to pick up a scent. In nearly every instance, Kelly was told, the man would eventually "smell fire" and upon digging down, would uncover a pile of 80-year-old charcoal!

Possibly the most uncanny of all his exploits, was the ability he displayed in identifying the inhabitants of unmarked graves.

At Gravelly Ford, in Nevada, for example, Davis located a grave which he identified and marked as that of John Snyder, murdered Oct. 18, 1846, as result of an argument that arose as the emigrant party had been crossing the Humboldt River. Other historians were quick to find fault with this identification. Snyder *couldn't* have been murdered and buried at that particular crossing, they asserted. It was contrary to all the records. Snyder was buried farther down the river, at Iron Point, or farther up, or across on the other side. He was buried almost any place, it seemed, except where Davis said.

But subsequent investigation proved that the "historians" were wrong, and Davis was right! The grave Davis had been first to identify as John Snyder's,

"Hell's Kitchen" former home of Charles E. Davis, on Mullet Island, in the Salton Sea, Southern California. This photo was taken twenty years after his death.



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was occupied by John Snyder and none other.

On another occasion, Davis found two graves and left notes in tobacco cans to mark them as the graves of Hargrove and Halloran.

"I doubted that identification for a long while," said Kelly. "But journals recently discovered prove that Davis—as usual—was correct!"

How had Charles Davis known the identities of these graves? How could he have known their identity . . . unless, as was covertly suggested at the time, he was being supernaturally guided in his quest by the spirit of someone who had taken part in that tragic epic . . .

IN the course of his field research, which spanned a two-year period, Davis picked up a soldier, Emile Cote, who agreed to accompany him for a-while. Upon reaching Skull Valley, in Western Utah, the men made camp and continued afoot into the grim desolation and dread immensity of the Great Salt Desert—a land area nearly as large as the State of New Jersey, but wherein Davis was sanguinely confident he could locate a group of five wagons which the Donners had abandoned.

And, incredibly enough, Davis and Cote actually *found* those wagons, together with the bones of oxen, still lying beneath their yokes where they had fallen more than three-quarters of a century before!

After photographing the scene of tragedy, Davis and Cole continued to follow the Donners' *still visible* wagon tracks for nearly twenty miles into the salt waste, all along that way finding more bones, and wagon wheels, and barrels fallen to staves, and abandoned household gear. When a depleted water supply at last forced the men to turn back, they had already been lured too far into the salt flats; and long before reaching their base camp the water in their canteens was exhausted and the two were staggering blindly and raving in delirium.

Experiences of this sort were too much for a man of Davis's years and strength, and completion of his self-assigned task found him broken in health and indescribably weary.

Returning to Fort Sutter, Davis placed at the disposal of the museum there the great wealth of material he had gathered along the Donner Trail—not only the valuable pioneer relics recovered, but reams of filled notebooks and huge files of maps and photographs. When he further expressed a desire to record his impressions of the Donner trek, as interpretated through the retracing of that trail, a stenographer was placed at his service, and for weeks he endeavored to dictate the story.

But the effort was useless. The story refused to take form. The once brilliant and meticulous mind of the man seemed frayed beyond all understanding; and the once strong voice repeatedly faltered and trailed away, until the final result of his dictation was only a purile and disconnected jumble.

Sick in body and soul, his strength and savings exhausted, Charles Davis returned to Mullet Island—a man grown old in the brief time lapse of only two years!

Even in view of the hardships endured and thousands of hours of strenuous labor expended in the course of his two-year efforts, it seems unlikely that physical factors, alone, could have been responsible for the deep spiritual and mental blight that had swept over this Man from Mullet. Is it not possible, then, that Davis's dissolution did not come from physical causes, but was rooted in the horror and ghastliness transmitted to him vicariously in the mile-by-mile tracing of a tragic trail?

DOGGING the footsteps of the Donners, plodding endlessly over the same desolate barrens they had crossed nearly a century before, sleeping in the same camps where their men and women and little children had died from starvation and cold and hunger and thirst and exhaustion, kneeling beside their unmarked graves in the wilderness, looking upon their abandoned wagons and the whitening bones of their oxen, reading the ghastly, hand-penned records of that terrible winter at Donner Lake, forever seeking to put himself in the place of these people in order to better understand the abysmal depths of despair and desperation that had led them, at last, to cooking and eating the flesh of their own dead—if all this had not contributed to Davis's mental upheaval, at least it had gnawed so deeply into his heart and soul that those memories were to haunt and hound him all the remaining days of his life.

Hoping to divert his mind from this fixation that had come to possess it, former friends of "The Captain" tried to interest him in reopening his little resort on Mullet Island; but if he heard them, he gave no evidence of that fact.

"It almost seemed as if his ears were attuned to a different wave length," one of his friends said later. "He seemed to be hearing 'Voices' the others of us couldn't hear . . ."

And, possibly, that explanation had not been too far wrong. Who knows enough about the hyperphysical to say that ghostly Voices were not coming across the decades to Charles Davis—the voices of martyred Tamsen and George Donner, of "Little Charlie" Stanton, abandoned to perish alone beside the trail, of murdered John Snyder, and banished James Reed, and "Uncle Billy" Graves, and grieving Mary Graves. Who knows but all these shadowy forms from Outer Space were whispering to the Man from Mullet . . . were telling him that through one medium alone might their pioneer epic be recounted in all its grisly horror.

How else explain the fact that Charles Davis, in his mad groping for articulation, should have turned to paint and canvas as his chosen means of expression?

That he had no knowledge of art forms or mediums left him as wholly undaunted as the fact that he had no funds with which to purchase paint and other necessary art materials. When determination is sitting in the saddle, even a lame horse manages to walk.

While making his earlier scientific survey of the mud pots around Mullet Island, Davis had noticed the presence of clay in a wide range of tints. Remembering this, now, he revisited the geyser field, gathered quantities of each color mud, dried it, pulverized it to powder, and sifted it through silk. These natural pigments he then redissolved in the clear oil rendered from native mullet; and with this improvised paint for a "medium" he was ready to start work.

Hunched before a makeshift easel, in the cluttered, poorly-lighted shabbiness of Hell's Kitchen, Charles Davis picked up his makeshift pallette, dipped a makeshift brush into makeshift paint, applied the first bold stroke to a makeshift canvas . . . and began pouring out his soul!

Furiously, zealously, fanatically, that outpouring of emotion was to continue

Painting by Charles Davis depicting members of the starving Donner-Reed party as they leave their winter camp at Donner Lake in a desperate attempt to escape across the mountainous snows of the Sierra in January, 1847. The two foreground figures are life size.

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Left: Painting of Donner-Reed Trail, by Charles E. Davis. The caption reads: "One Day Late." Right: Primitive painting depicting an episode in the tragic Donner-Reed Trail. Caption of painting: "Her Last Sunset."

for *three full years* . . . and during those years, in that cluttered fisherman's shack on Mullet Island, were to be born some of the most hauntingly bizarre primitives ever produced by the brush of an American painter!

CHARLES DAVIS wasn't an artist . . . and neither were his paintings ART as taught in schools. Critics would have had a Roman holiday finding fault with their perspective and lines, and shading, and half a hundred other flaws; while the color-limitation imposed by those brown-predominant pigments, gave to all the paintings a grim, somber sameness. But in that grimness, that somberness, lay power and vigor.

Here was a mad epic of salt blizzard and searing sun, of man's pain and perfidy and treachery and tears, of burned wagons and oxen dying in their yokes, of fevered babies crying for water . . . and Death riding through the night on a dark horse.

This was not Art, but Drama—Drama stripped to the bare bone! It was defeat, despair, discouragement, hopelessness, heartlessness. It was more than Art . . . it was the laying bare of a man's soul.

As each canvas was stripped from the easel, another was flung in place before the paint had dried on the first. As long as time and funds permitted, Davis framed the pictures—choosing for that purpose a heavy, unadorned black wood, as gaunt and sepulchral as the scenes themselves. Later, there was neither time nor money for framing . . . but still, the pictures poured forth!

After the walls of Hell's Kitchen were covered with the huge, life-sized canvasses, Davis began piling them anywhere he could find space—on his table, his bed, on the chairs; and finally, he was stacking them on the floor, one upon another.

No one knows how many pictures of the Donner Trail were painted by Davis in the course of that frenzied, three-year effort. Probably there were a hundred of them, at least; possibly even more. Brought forth under terrific strain, emotional as well as physical, each succeeding canvas had drawn more deeply on the man's failing strength, until, at last, he knew that his fountain of endurance was about run dry. With this realization, Davis yielded to a belated desire to return to the home and family he had left many years before.

But Charles Davis's time on earth was short.

In May, 1933, only a few days after his arrival in New England, the mysterious Man from Mullet Island died quietly at his ancestral home. He was fifty-six years of age.

TIME PASSED—twenty years of it—and with the spring of 1953, I was at Niland, California, doing research for an article on the Salton Sea. While talking with one of the local old-timers, the name of Charles Davis was mentioned, and, instantly, I was remembering that gaunt, cadaverous man with the dark, burning eyes—the Man of Mystery, who had devoted the closing years of his life to tragically recording the tale of a tragic endeavor. With that memory, there swept over me an urge to revisit Mullet Island and see what changes those two decades had brought.

Although far more ramshackle than when I had seen it last, the old boat dock was still strewn with cast-off fishing gear and tattered gill nets, and dead fish. Following the dusty foottrail back from the dock, my memory guided me unerringly through the old cafe and dancehall—now dark and silent—and on out the rear door of the cafe to the cabin, Hell's Kitchen—still the same smelly, half-forbidding, wholly fascinating place, I had remembered from kid days.

Beaten upon by salt-laden desert winds, and faded and cracked by soaring summer heat, it huddled against the island slope like an old woman shorn of both heart and hope. In the hot dusty little yard, and around the front porch, lay the same cluttery collection—broken oars, a wrecked dory, old rubber boots, a coil of rotting rope, rusted oar locks, bleached fish bones, an old felt hat trodden into a shapeless mass, and an old wooden bucket, fallen to staves.

Picking my way over the loose boards of the front porch, I stepped through the sagging door into a half-dark room that reeked with an unwholesome moldy smell, like the inside of a grave. There were a few broken chairs and pine benches, a plank table, and an old cook stove with a rusty pipe. Yards of torn fish nets and cork floats hung in dirty gray loops from the bare rafters, and over everything lay a deep mantle of wind-driven sand and packrat litter.

Otherwise there was nothing in the room but a deathlike stillness . . . and the paintings!

Accusingly, questioningly, condemningly, the horror-ridden faces in those primitive portraits stared at me from dark corners, from behind the door, from beneath cobwebbed loops of the fish net. Some still hung on the rough board walls, others leaned against the table, still more were strewn upon the splintered floor, their canvasses torn and cracked and trodden upon by careless feet.

Picking my way around and between the pictures, while the white salt dust on the floor crunched under my shoes, and rose to sting my nostrils and drift restlessly through the dead air, I found myself turning over in my mind the old recurrent questions:

Why had Davis suddenly elected to research the Donner Trail? How had he been guided to lost graves and scenes of tragedy unknown to any living man? And, finally, why had this man of mystery chosen to tell the story of that tragic epic through this mad outpouring of primitive oils?

Only Davis had known the answer to those questions—if even *he* had known! —and now that he was twenty years in his grave, those questions would never be answered.

It didn't matter that he had been an eccentric character and a man of mys-

(Continued on page 48)

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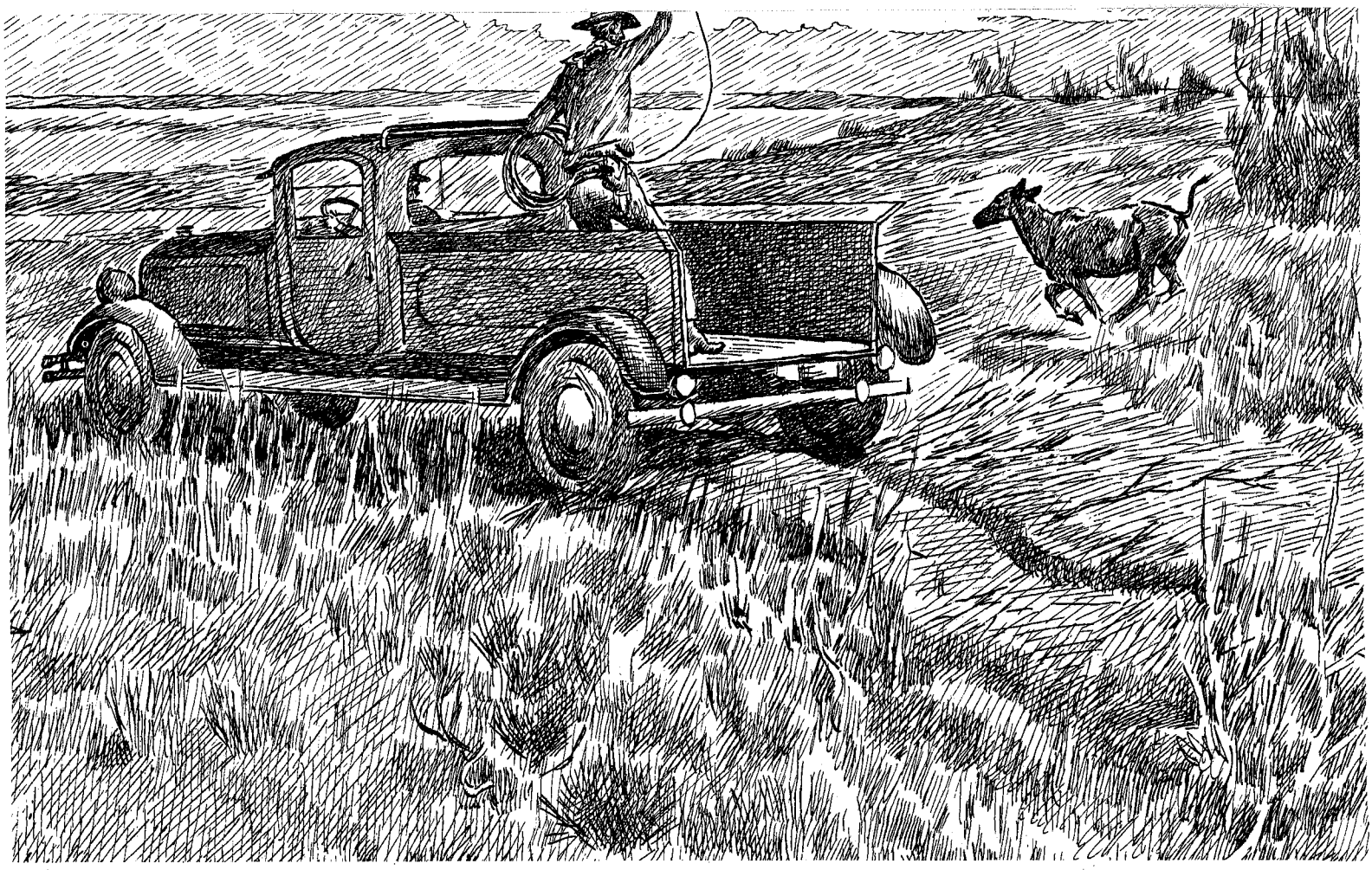

Believe it or not, even in our modern West

They're Still Rustling

BY LEWIS NORDYKE

ON a sweltering summer night in the dark of the moon two men stopped their truck just off a country road that ran along the fence-row of the H. L. Baldwin ranch in Oklahoma. The pair crawled cautiously out of the truck and looked carefully around. Down a grassy slope past a clump of trees several white-faced cattle grazed in the gathering darkness. One of the men carried a small white sack.

The men walked slowly toward the cattle, and, when thirty yards away from the herd, they stopped and opened the sack. Hurriedly they dropped little piles of white stuff on the grass. The cattle raised their heads and bawled hungrily; they trotted toward the men, downed their heads and went to work on the white stuff. The men emptied their sack and ran back to the truck. They turned it so the back wheels stood in the road ditch, lowering the back end. They dropped the tail-gate to the ground so that it made a sort of loading platform.

The men mashed down the fence, took a lariat from the truck and walked back to the cattle which were busily licking the salt the visitors had put out. It was easy to drop a rope on the head of a yearling and force it up the tail-gate into the truck. Within a remarkably short time seven valuable beef animals stood in the truck. Quickly the men repaired the fence and obscured their tracks; the remaining cattle would make the salt disappear. The driver pulled the truck back on the road, and his partner stamped out the tracks. The truck rolled down the road, turned off on the highway and headed for Springfield, Missouri.

So well had the rustlers covered up all signs of their clever job that the next day neighbors passing along the country road didn't notice that a truck had turned or that the fence had been mashed down and then repaired.

The cattle were sold to individuals in Missouri, and two nights later the rustlers were back for more live loot. This time they hit the ranch of H. H. Noel. Their salt worked again, and they were soon heading again for Springfield. This was in 1954.

Periodically the salty rustlers returned to the range in that Oklahoma county until they made off with 63 head of beef cattle. Not until the early spring of 1956 were the men caught, convicted and sent to prison for long terms.

Clever as these ultra-modern rustlers were, an age-old thing tripped them up—the cattle brand. Inspectors Coy Rosenthal and C. E. Hodges of the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association solved the case, although it took them more than a year to do it. The ranchers began missing their cattle and reported to the Association of which they are members. The inspectors got busy. They heard of some cattle in Missouri bearing the brands of the Oklahoma ranchers. The inspectors started back-tracking, checking on sales; in this work they found more of the stolen stock and the broadening back-track eventually led to the rustlers.

IF you think the day of the range cattle rustler is a thing of the past and a historic topic for the magazines, you are plumb wrong, pard. There's almost as much cattle stealing as in the rough, tough days of the open range. Back there then the boys rounded up cattle and drove them away; today the rustler is

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Cattle!

Illustrated by B. D. Tittsworth

smarter—like the men who pulled the salt trick. And then there are the hard-riding, clever, sleuthing men who do nothing but track rustlers.

Along with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the famed Texas Rangers, the band of range detectives is one of the oldest continuous forces of peace officers in North America. It started in 1877, when cowmen on the Texas frontier got together in a small organization, chipped in money and hired picked men to wage relentless war on cattle rustlers. That early-day organization of cowmen has grown into the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association which now has almost 10,000 members in nearly all the range states of the nation. But it depends on a small force of men—28 in number—to ride herd on the rustlers. Between March, 1955, and the same month in 1956, these men tracked down and helped prosecute more than 30 rustlers.

One would naturally think that the rustlers would finally give up, but they don't; like calves, there's always a new crop of rustlers—men who think *they* can get by with it, although others may fumble or goof and get caught. Through the ages, rustlers have been able to adapt themselves to conditions. When the fast motor truck and the networks of paved highways came, the rustler saw his chance, and he bounced off his old pony and into a high-powered truck.

There has actually been rustling by airplane. A couple of years ago a light plane landed on a large ranch in southwestern Texas. The pilot crawled out with a hammer and a butcher knife. He caught a calf, knocked it in the head, slashed the calf in two pieces, loaded the front half in his plane and took off, leaving the hindquarters which bore the brand.

This half a calf—or cow or bull—stealing is not the least unusual for men in automobiles. A Dallas County, Texas, ranchman realized this one morning a few years ago. Scarcely 100 yards from a busy highway leading into the city of Dallas, lay the front half of a slain Hereford breeding cow worth at least $600 a few hours before.

Just before dawn, two, or maybe three, men had parked a car beside the highway, slipped into the pasture and felled the cow with a hammer blow to the skull; then they slashed off the hindquarters, the sirloiny part, loaded their loot in the trunk of their car and fled—the fresh beef destined for a home freezer or an unscrupulous retail market.

This is the latest thing in the old art of rustling—this half-a-beef stealing. It takes place in thickly populated places where there are many people to buy illicit beef. Nearly every major city in Texas has had rustling of this sort. Only a short while back a registered Hereford bull worth $1,500 was killed on a ranch near San Antonio. Only the hindquarters were taken.

Not long ago, when the price of cattle was still so high that a newborn calf was worth $100, cowboys on the big Ferd Halsell ranch in northern Texas found more than 100 dead mother cows on the range. There were no calves bawling around. Bill Luman, a steady-eyed veteran of nearly 30 years as a range detective, was called. He rode the ranch and found 22 more cows that had been dead only a few days. The skull of each had been crushed.

THOUGH a man of the old school of rustler-chasers, Luman worked like a modern Sherlock Holmes. He showed up in the stockyards at Fort Worth, the nearest major market. He learned that, three days before, 22 unbranded calves had been sold there. From the buyers he obtained a good description of the three men who had sold the calves. He suspected three men in the vicinity of the ranch, but he had no evidence.

Luman was positive of how the crafty rustlers were working—killing cows and stealing their calves. With the mothers dead, there were no big-bagged cows lowing for their calves and attracting the immediate attention of ranch hands. This gave the rustlers time to get away with the calves and sell them. And there was another reason for killing the cows; if the stolen calves were nabbed by officers and returned to the range there would be no mothers to claim them. The claiming of a calf by a cow is proof so legal that it has stood up in court that the calf belongs to the cow. So the rustlers eliminated all chances of this working against them.

Luman now set out crawling over the range. Everywhere a cow had been killed, the detective moved patiently on his hands and knees, examining every mark and track. A few days later he enlisted the aid of the Texas Rangers in making plaster casts of horse tracks.

One afternoon, the men Luman suspected asked him if they could be of any assistance.

"Believe you can," Luman told them. "Let's take a look at your horses."

The men joked while casts were made of the feet of the horses. But the laughing ceased when Luman said: "Let's go to jail, boys."

The detective took two sets of casts—of the tracks he found and of the horses' feet—into court, and the three man were given long prison terms. A slight, but definite, imperfection in a horse's hoof showed plainly in both sets of casts. The clobbering of mother cows ceased on the Halsell ranch, and Luman headed for the next job.

As the old-timers in this Scotland Yard of the West remember, all the shooting in this business hasn't been aimed at the rustlers. In nearly every rustling case, only the evidence the detective gathers can convict a man. So the long history of the range detective force has been marked with attempts to "rub out" the man with the evidence.

On an Easter evening well within the memory of veterans like Bill Luman and G. O. Stoner, two detectives, Horace Roberson and Dave Allison, sat in the lobby of a tiny hotel in the town of Seminole near the Texas-New Mexico border. They chatted with six other men, among them the district judge who was to hold court the next day. The detectives were in Seminole to present evidence to the grand jury against two men accused of stealing about 600 cattle.

Darkness settled over the little town. The door to the hotel lobby opened noiselessly. Two men stepped inside. One held a shotgun and the other a pistol. The guns roared at the same split-second, and Allison and Roberson slumped to the floor. All the men except the judge and the detectives dived for cover. Twenty shots were fired in all. The bodies of the detectives were torn to bits with hot lead. No one else was hit.

Roberson's wife, who had retired, rushed to the head of the stairs when she heard the shooting. When she saw what had happened, she ran to her room, grabbed a small caliber pistol, raced down the stairs and out on the street. She fired at the fleeing men and hit each of them. The wounds weren't severe but so painful that a few hours later the gunmen telephoned the sheriff and said they wanted to give themselves up. They were the accused rustlers. They were sent to prison for murder instead of rustling.

Since that time, the detectives have sent to headquarters written reports on all investigations. Even should a detective be killed before given a chance to testify, the evidence would still be there. The main idea is to lock up the rustler.

SOME modern rustlers try old tricks. One day a few years ago, Detective Stoner at Houston was called to a ranch where two men—neighbors with just a fence between them—were at each others' throats, arguing hotly over sixteen cattle which each claimed.

Stoner promptly ended the argument

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Buck Richmond and the cougar he killed with a Scout hatchet.

He Wrestled A Cougar!

BY JAMES Y. NICOL

From The Star Weekly

In a life and death struggle, this big-game hunter, using only his bare hands, fought a hunger-crazed cat to a draw

HAVING been charged by a grizzly bear and kicked by a cow moose, 43-year-old Gerald Walters, a big-game hunter, knew how to keep his wits even while a hunger-crazed female cougar chewed his right hand.

He boxed and he wrestled the giant cat to a draw decision in a life or death struggle. Then his good friend, Richard H. (Buck) Richmond, killed her with a Boy Scout hatchet.

"I am alive because right after she pounced that cougar stopped to raise her left paw and spit square in my eye," said Mr. Walters. "Doing that she added insult to injury, and she gave me the opening I needed. I let her have it hard as I could right on her snout with my right fist. Then I grabbed her ears with my left hand and hung on to the fur."

Suffering bites and scratches which kept him in a hospital for two weeks, Mr. Walters regards the cougar as the most treacherous of all wild animals in Canada. Unlike the growling bear or the snorting moose, or even the despised rattlesnake, the cougar allows no warning in attack.

While British Columbia game commissioners J. G. Cunningham and A. R. Butler insist that the cougar is no man-eater, but a coward at heart, and that only those beasts that are demented through hunger or disease will attack a human, the guide refuses to give the oversized feline with the dark fawn coat the benefit of the doubt.

Within the last two years, Vancouver Island cougars killed an Indian child and badly mauled a Kelsey Bay trapper, Ed McLean.

Miss Dinah Varney, of Varney Bay, who also runs a trapline on the island, and has collected $200 in bounties in the last two years—proof that she has killed 10 cougars—asserts that they are "very dangerous."

Attacked three years ago by a beast that broke out of her trap, she dropped it with her last shot between the eyes as the critter was crouching to spring at her only twenty feet away.

On the main streets of Victoria, 26 years ago, a cougar was shot while bound, presumably, for a department store. In 1952, 524 were killed in the province, compared with the 725 record for 1948. But the drop in bounty claims does not mean that the "cat" is on the wane. Game officials are still organizing cougar hunts and many thrilling encounters are related. None surpasses the capture near Port Alice.

This village of 1,100 owned by the Alaska Pine and Cellulose Ltd., lies on a beautiful inlet off Quatsino Sound that juts in from the vast Pacific near the northerly tip of Vancouver Island. Mr. Richmond is manager of the plant. Mr. Walters, who hails from Quesnel Lake in the famous Cariboo game country, is a millwright.

With the opening of the trout season, the two men, both six-footers, handsome in build, and genial in disposition, went to nearby Victoria Lake, with two of Mr. Richmond's three children: Terry, ten, and John, seven. They intended to fish for rainbows, Kamloops, and the delicious cutthroats, so named because of their peculiar red markings.

REACHING Sodaberg beach about 11 a.m., the men kindled a campfire as the air was chilly. Because the driftwood on shore was damp, Mr. Walters ducked into the bush along an old trail, looking for dry tree bark.

"I had only gone fifty yards when I came to a dead cedar tree or snag with jagged ends," he recalled. "I jumped up to break one off, when, out of the corner of my eye, I saw a sort of flashing movement. I turned to face this cougar. She had sprung up from beside a long hemlock log that lay near the cedar.

"The one punch I landed on her nose as she jumped me knocked her off her haunches but she dove back and sank her fangs in my right leg below the knee. What a bite! Felt as if someone had driven fourteen spikes right through the flesh in one blow with a sledge hammer. I specify fourteen because that is how many holes they found in my trouser-leg—and in my own leg—afterwards.

"At the same time she was raking my left leg with her right hind foot and she had claws about two inches long. I dropped on my right knee and grabbed her ears in my left hand. I caught her by the throat with my right.

"I held both my arms firm against her front legs and as a sort of wedge, so that she couldn't flail me with her front paws. Now I was face to face with her and I remember her eyes, like two green marbles but with a glare like nothing else I'd ever seen. Her long whiskers brushed my chin while she lashed her long tail.

"Snarling, spitting, growling, she twisted her head. I knew if I let go for a moment I would be done. But I noticed that if I relaxed my grip on her throat she didn't struggle as hard as when choked.

"I let her have her breath for a couple of seconds and by pulling on her ears I worked her head back until I was well over her. Then I jerked up my left knee

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Illustrated by Mary O'Carroll

and planted it on her chest, and brought my right knee on top of her nose, and looked around.

"I hadn't let a peep out of me, partly because I was completely taken by surprise and again I needed every ounce of energy in that struggle. I was also afraid that the cougar's mate might be nearby. I didn't want to bring him on. But I had to take that chance and so I shouted out to Buck, back on the beach. 'Come on—a cougar's got me!'

"He was with his boys splitting kindling and he ran up the trail, hatchet in hand. I hung onto the cougar's head and kept her with her back toward Buck.

"He waited long enough to make sure that I was clear and then he hacked at the cougar's spine. One, two, three, four, five times he clipped her about the midsection. She lunged with the pain of the first couple of blows and that's when my right hand slipped off her throat and she snapped it in her mouth.

"She crunched her teeth through the thumb, the forefinger at the base, and into the flesh of the palm. That hurt worse than the fourteen spikes in my leg.

"I was terrified by the way she kept twisting and I shouted to Buck, 'She's ripping my fingers off!'

"He tried to jam the hatchet blade in her mouth and to pry the jaws open but she wouldn't let go. I forced her head up and turned it so that Buck could bang her skull. Three blows there with the blunt edge of the hatchet and her green eyes glazed and turned milk-white. She was dead but still she hung onto my hand. After she flopped on her side, Buck pried her jaws apart and I was free.

"All this took about six minutes. The bites and scratches left me weak, but I was very lucky! My only weapon was a little jackknife in my left hip pocket and I'd had no chance to reach it. Even if I had carried a rifle, it would have been useless. That Boy Scout hatchet proved to be the best thing."

THOUGH warned to keep back by their father, Terry and John Richmond followed him up the trail and saw a struggle between man and beast that they will not likely witness again in their lives.

"I never faced a cougar before outside of a cage," said Mr. Richmond. "I'm glad I happened to have that Scout hatchet. When I reached Gerry, he was bent over the beast beside the log. I could not see much of the cougar in the thick foliage: salal brushes and sword ferns. I had to take time to size up the situation.

"What I noticed first was the cougar's long tail. She was thrashing it furiously and spitting and clawing. Every move she made reminded me of a cat. Plainly her long back was the vulnerable point so I chopped her spine. I knew by the second wallop I had broken it. I could see the jagged ends. But while her lower quarters were paralyzed she still hung on to Gerry.

"He hung on, too, and I hammered her on the skull. I thought that I must have crushed it. Later we learned that we only bruised it. She was about two years old, measured 67 inches from the tip of her nose to the tip of her tail, and weighed only 110 pounds.

"There wasn't an ounce of fat on her. Plainly she was ravenous. Cougars are so numerous here they have cleared out most of the forest game: the deer, coons, squirrels, and grouse. There was a herd of elk in the hills a while ago but they have moved on. That's why the cougars are cleaning up on dogs and cats, even."

Richmond explained that as he helped Walters back to the beach he feared that, because the man was bleeding profusely, he must be grievously hurt.

"I sat him down by the fire and hurried to my outboard motorboat, drawn up on the shore. I had made some tea and when I came back he was sipping it. When he told me, 'You'd better get that cougar out of the bush,' I knew he wasn't going to die.

"I went back to the trail and dragged the beast out by the tail. I put the carcass in the bottom of the boat and we headed for home. We had to go three miles in the boat to the pumphouse.

"Imagine this: Gerry insisted on steering the outboard with his left hand! And who should happen to be at the pumphouse but the only physician within miles, Dr. Jack Gibbings. He had driven there to admire the spring scenery and he rushed Gerry to the hospital."

Mr. Richmond suffered only a scratch on the little finger of his left hand. "I happen to be a southpaw, you see."

He turned the carcass over to Constable Tom Foster of the RCMP, who skinned it and gave the pink flesh to the Chinese folk of Port Alice. They promptly held a feast. "Cougar tastes fine, just like chicken," one reported.

(Continued on page 33)

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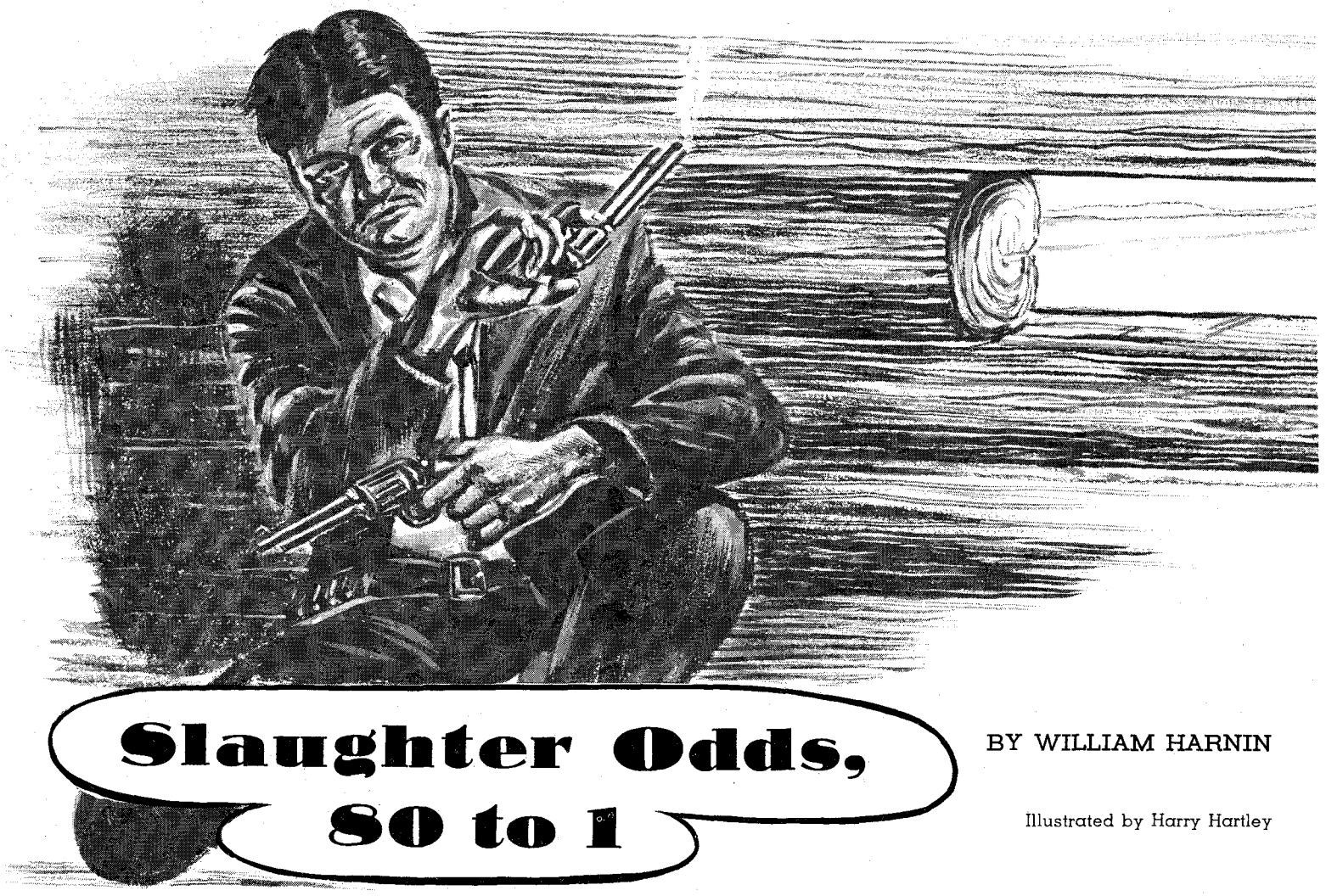

Slaughter Odds, 80 to 1

BY WILLIAM HARNIN

Illustrated by Harry Hartley

BEHIND the flimsy shelter of the adobe-caked timbers, the besieged man raised two six-guns to fire deliberately at the running, shouting Texans across the dusty road. Lynch victim Elfego Baca had sought shelter from the rain of bullets only ten minutes before. But, of a certainty, ten minutes can be an eternity!

Already Baca had shot Jim Hearne—killed him in the cabin doorway when Jim forced his hand. What else could he have done? And last night he'd killed Perham—shot him off his horse. Now from the buildings about the Frisco, New Mexico, plaza this December 1 of 1884, eighty Texas cowhands were slamming slugs into the clay-daubed logs of Baca's shelter, howling for his Spanish blood.

Elfego Baca grinned, hunkering his solid bulk onto the hard-packed clay floor of the *jacal.* This was beginning to look like an old-fashioned New Mexico lynching!

Baca squinted through the splintered logs, watching the gunflashes across the way and speculating coolly on his chances. Had he an hour of life left? Two hours? At best, half a day? He shrugged, reproaching himself wryly: "Elfego, why don't you ever mind your own business?"

A good question, Baca admitted to himself. For instance, if he'd minded his own business in Don Pedro Simpson's office, he wouldn't have ridden to Frisco, New Mexico, in the first place. He could have stayed in Socorro, where he belonged, punching cattle for a living. Instead, he'd played the fool by accepting a job as political ramrod from Sheriff Simpson.

"Get me the Frisco vote, boy," the fat Sheriff had said. So—he had tried . . .

Now, crouched in a crumbling corner of the bullet-torn *jacal,* Baca winced as lead slugs hammered the adobe-covered logs. Over his head the rickety shelter creaked and groaned. Gunsmoke filtered through the scattered chinks in the walls. The acrid sting of urine, burned powder, and adobe dust bit into his throat and nostrils.

Across the street, the shouts and gun fire slowed down suddenly as the Texans' ammunition and whiskey supply ran low. Baca glanced at his turnip watch, hanging from a nail on the wall. It was 9:30, he saw with surprise. For only thirty minutes he'd been holed up here in the *jacal* . . . A bullet plucked at the brim of his Stetson, signalling the resumption of the siege. *Madre de Dios,* if only he'd minded his own business! . . .

For example, Baca reflected morosely, if he'd minded his own business yesterday right here in the Frisco plaza, he could have been sitting with his friends in a *cantina* at this very moment. No, again he had to play the fool by beating up a Mexican-baiting cowhand. And then, when Perham, the cowhand's foreman, pulled a gun to protect his man, Baca shot him down. Twice he had been a fool . . .

BACA shook his head, trying to clear his mind of the painful memory of Perham's death. Killing men was not to Elfego's liking. But all his life he had encountered the cattlemen's savage hatred of the natives. He'd seen his own father railroaded to jail for killing a cowman in self-defense. He'd seen the huge Texas trailherds over-grazing the rich winter grasses of his home Valley, and the cowmen riding arrogantly over the tilled fields. He remembered the raw hatred he had met all his life, and somehow he felt relieved that at last he was making a stand. After all, a brave man dies but once . . .

Elfego saw a cowpuncher's head bob into view around a corner of the church across the plaza, and instantly he snapped a slug at it. The man dropped. The Texans had begun their siege from the church. The cornered *politico* heard the Slaughter trailherd men arguing fiercely among themselves between bursts of gun fire.

"What the hell are we waiting for?" somebody yelled. "Let's rush the damned greaser! He's all alone, ain't he?"

Cooler heads in the Slaughter bunch debated the wisdom of an all-out assault. Most of the Texans listened to their leader, a thin, wiry man Baca did not know. He did not speak with a Texas drawl, and Baca guessed that he must be Bill French, an expatriate Englishman who lived at the WS Ranch in the Valley near Frisco. He it was who had ramrodded the Slaughter "drumhead" court in Milligan's saloon that had "convicted" Baca for the "murder" of Perham. Now here he was again, urging the others on.

Baca saw the shadowy figure of the Englishman behind the church buttress. He poked a gun muzzle through a crack in the adobe wall of the *jacal* and fired. French leaped and yelled as the slug spatted into the wall at his side.

The Texans continued their argument behind the buttress, passing a half-empty bottle from hand to hand. "Let's go!"

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The odds were long, *verdad.* But why worry? Life had been good up until now. All twenty years of it. And if a politico has the courage to keep fighting, why . . . *quien sabe* what things may occur?

cried French. "He can't hit all of us."

Three men burst from cover, running low, crouched over. Baca emptied one Colt at them, and they ducked for shelter, one of them clutching a broken arm.

The watch read four o'clock. Two dead, two wounded. Twilight crimsoned the low hills. A cool breeze came in off the desert, filling the plaza with the fragrance of pinon smoke.

Beside the church, Bill French tried again to urge his mates to the attack. Baca shrugged as the argument continued. He had an excellent chance of dying before darkness fell, but why worry about it? He'd had a good life so far, all twenty years of it. Twenty years on the frontier had taught him to be a fatalist. When he was a year old, Jicarilla Apaches had struck a Conestoga wagon near Santa Rosa, New Mexico, and kidnapped him. Two days later, inexplicably, the Apaches came back and silently returned the unharmed infant. It seemed that all his life he had lived a charmed life, but now? . . .

Baca's watch read five o'clock: Two dead, three wounded. The besieged man watched as the Texans' wiry leader, Bill French, ordered two of the Slaughter crew to saddle up. "Dynamite!" French shouted, turning his head toward the *jacal* so that Baca would be sure to hear. "Dynamite—and get back here fast!"

Baca grinned his wiry grin, bracing his broad back against the wall of his shelter. French had come up with a good idea at last!

DUSK FELL. Baca made himself semi-comfortable for the night. He was dozing when the splintered front porch of the *jacal* gave way with a screech of ripping nails. The roof fell in, showering the besieged man with splintered timbers and crumbled adobe. Baca dived for the corner as the wreckage crashed about him. The Texans cheered hopefully at the noise. Baca laughed and fired into the church. The cheering stopped on a scream of pain.

By match flare the watch read nine o'clock. French's dynamite had not yet arrived. Calmly, Baca stretched out on the earthen floor to rest. His thoughts whirled as he tried to sleep.

He'd shown these cocky Texans plenty—shown them that a Spanish-American could take their measure and more . . . Gradually his racing pulse quieted and he slept . . .

The thunder of hoof-beats awakened him. The dynamite riders had returned. Baca took up his post in a corner of the *jacal,* peering through a chink in the wall. In the December darkness he could barely see the shadowy forms of the dynamite throwers creeping up on him. His guns blasted, but the Slaughter men heaved the bundle of glowing sticks through the open doorway. Baca followed the path of the glowing fuse and hurled himself away from it. The explosive bounced off the logs, and the few upright supports of the *jacal* disintegrated in a roar and a blinding flash of light.

Dazed but unhurt, Baca fired both guns into the echoing darkness. The Texans replied with sporadic rifle fire. Silence settled down again. Baca slept, too exhausted to keep watch.

At dawn, Baca's watch read six o'clock. Second day: The score of enemy casualties was three dead, five wounded, near as he could figure. He watched the empty plaza and the silent church, yet he had eyes for the beauty of the morning.

Dawn moved slowly along the river valley, coloring first the high peaks of the mountains, and then the sage and mesquite clumps on their slopes. Baca glanced about his collapsed prison. The sun's early rays picked out the shattered door, the crumpled stove, his slug-pierced Stetson on the floor. "And Baca?" he smiled to himself. "Baca's glad to be alive!"

It suddenly occurred to him that he was hungry. Cautiously he kindled a small fire in the beat-up stove and prepared a breakfast of stale meat and soggy beans.

The smoke of Baca's breakfast fire infuriated the awakened Texans. They ripped a volley into the wrecked *jacal.* Baca crouched behind the stove and wondered in amazement how any living thing—much less a man of his regrettable bulk—could survive such a barrage. Yet he was unhit and even managed to fire back.

Now the watch was filmed over with gun powder stains and adobe dust, yet the hands read ten o'clock. The morning dragged on; the fire of the Texans became desultory.

Suddenly, Baca's eyes fell unbelievingly on a Slaughter cowhand advancing from the protection of the church buttress. He carried a small stove in front of him, shield-like, his bald head glistening above the stove lids. Baca pumped a single shot at the inviting target; the cowhand shrieked once and died.

NOON came and passed; Baca's watch read five o'clock. The Texans got a new idea—fire. Eagerly they tore at mesquite bushes under Bill French's fierce urging. "Burn him!" snarled French. "Burn the greaser!"

Grimly, the volunteers mounted their horses, bearing the kerosene-soaked branches, and rode straight for the *jacal.* Baca exposed himself daringly, six-guns blazing. Unhit, the whooping horsemen spurred past the *jacal,* each lighting his clump of branches and tossing it onto the wrecked roof.

Baca settled back into the debris, waiting stoically to be burned out. His luck held. The mesquite clumps burned slowly and smoldered out.

Exhausted, his nerves shot, Baca's only hope now was that the mob was played out too. He heard some Slaughter men arguing angrily about "getting to hell out of here—forget the damned greaser!" Baca smiled wearily. The Texans' "whiskey courage" must be fading away.

Steel tires screeched suddenly on the hard gravel in the alley by Milligan's store. Through heavy-lidded eyes, Baca saw a buckboard enter the square from the Socorro road. More reinforcements for the Texans?

The buckboard drove directly between the *jacal* and the church building, and stopped. Two men descended, and Baca saw with quickening interest that one of the newcomers was his good friend, Francesquito Naranjo. The other man he did not know.

"Where's Baca?" the stranger inquired of the Texans. Bill French silently stabbed a finger at the *jacal.*

"Is he dead?" the stranger asked.

"Hell no!" the Englishman scoffed. "Not yet, he ain't."

Naranjo called across the plaza. "Elfego? Are you alive?"

Baca stood erect in the battered building, his eyes shining. "Francesquito, *mi amigo,* is it really you?"

"*Si,* Elfego. Come on out. We will protect you."

Baca reloaded his guns and pocketed his turnip watch, which now read six o'clock of the second day. The killer of four men and wounder of eight others climbed through the lone window in the still-standing single corner of the hut. His politician's coat, a once magnificent Prince Albert, was filthy with adobe

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The rugged breed of men who follow the big-time rodeo trail will never forget

STEAMBOAT—KING OF THE BUCKERS!

BY SAM HOWE

From Western Horseman

THE LAST EVENT IN THE BRONC BUSTIN' CONTEST IS STEAMBOAT WITH GUY HOLT UP."

This was it! The grandstand crowd at Cheyenne's Frontier Days tensed. Somewhere a Texas cowboy whooped. A drunken soldier from nearby Fort Warren answered with a cheer, and the crowd laughed its approval.

But it didn't ease the tension. All eyes stayed riveted on the arena gate. Through it a mounted pickup man led 1100 pounds of jet black horseflesh.

Steamboat! King of the Buckers!

Head erect, ears twisting, tail flicking, Steamboat trotted to a cleared space directly in front of the grandstand. He halted, faced the crowd and whinnied. It sounded more like a reedy wheeze. The spectators answered with a whoop and a holler.

They knew about that wheeze. As a colt, Steamboat had broken his nose, and it healed crooked. From then on he hissed and when the going got rough, his squeals took on the shriek of a steamboat whistle.

Steamboat with Guy Holt up, at Cheyenne, 1903. Photo by B. C. Buffum.

It only added to his glamour . . . for make no mistake about it, Steamboat had glamour. And did he ever love it!

Now he strutted back and forth in front of the grandstand: head up, tail aswish, like an actor making an entrance. That was Steamboat . . . an actor and an artist, unlike any other bucker.

He stood motionless while a pickup man slid a bucking rein and gunny sack blindfold over his head. He still looked every inch the show horse, an equine portrait of innocence. Who would guess what a mean cuss he could be!

EARED down, then, he waited. Guy Holt, a famous bronc buster, tossed up his red and blue saddle blanket.

The minute it touched his hide, Steamboat's knee-joints began to bend. Four hoofs planted solid to the ground, he started to squat.

Holt threw up his bronc saddle and screwed it on tight, planting one knee against the gelding's side and yanking up hard on the single cinch.

That done, he checked his own gear: bandanna, Stetson, spurs, and bucking corset. All were cinched tighter.

Steamboat's belly scraped dirt. Releasing him, the pickup man stood back. Holt swung aboard. Off came the blindfold.

A split second pause. Everyone held their breath.

And Steamboat exploded!

In one shocking eruption, he sprang off the ground, joints stiff, tail arched, neck straight out in front of him.

Zigzagging across the field, he jet propelled himself to the center of the arena. Pickup men, cowboy handlers, peelers, scattered to the fences.

The big gelding swapped both ends between jumps. Each time he came down on four steel ramrod legs, sending Holt up off the saddle. The peeler's arm clawed the air. A wide tunnel of daylight showed under the seat of his jeans.

But still Holt hung on, clinging with his knees and one hand on the horn.

Steamboat arched his back like a spitting cat. It left his rider no choice but to grab for leather. With barely seconds between the battering bucks, Holt clutched the horn in a death-like grip. His insides twisted, throbbed, writhed. His nose began to bleed.

The crowd leapt to its feet, screaming for both horse and rider:

"Ride 'im, cowboy! Ride 'im! *Ride 'im!*"

"Come on, Steamboat! Crack 'im off! *Crack 'im off!*"

Through their frenzied yells they could hear Steamboat's high shrill whistle. With each jolt, it soared sharper and higher till it rang jagged and shrill above the tumult.

Now, at the far end of the arena, he swapped ends and started back on a crooked return that swung the rider wildly. One zig followed another zag with a sunfish in between. On the last switch, when Steamboat's head and forefeet headed west while the rest of him lit out north, Guy Holt spilled down out of the saddle and hit dirt. Blacked out, he sprawled there.

With any other bronc it would have spelled injury or death, for the average outlaw is out to kill. But not Steamboat. Once rid of his rider, he took off toward the grandstand and never quit bucking till he raised the hated saddle. That done, he rested on his laurels and accepted the applause of the crowd.

A CHANGE in rodeo rules makes it hard to compare bronc riding of today with that of 1900. No ten second rule cut rides short then. The peeler stayed up until he held down his bronc or bit dust. On good broncs, most riders cracked off or gave up.

Steamboat never backed down. The first attempt to ride him on his home ranch, the Two Bar in Wyoming, resulted in a fight. Apparently he decided early in life that he'd never be a cutting horse. Since there's no place on a well-ordered ranch for a bronc, he had to be sold. Steamboat went into the rodeo circuit. And for fifteen years this high-roller refused to quit.

A cowboy ballad of the period tells of this:

I was out in Wyoming, way back in '03,
Where there's hosses aplenty and every one's free;
A bronc peeler's heaven, this country, I'm told,
So I high-tails it out there to get me some gold.

With my hoss and my saddle, I lands in Cheyenne,

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Illustrated by Dale Kaiser

And start looking around for a bucker to fan;
It sure don't take long to find out what's the score,
For the rodeo's on and there's twisters galore.

I've a "rep" to uphold so I signs up to ride,
Whatever I draw, a square-head or pie-eyed;
From the very first day I never gets throwed
Till I boarded old Steamboat and felt him explode.

He pulled up his head and I knew he unwound,
I could see the whole grandstand go spinning around,
His legs went out stiff and he humps up his back,
I tastes blood from my nose and could hear my ribs crack.

While he's cat-backing east, I'm a-flying out west,
So I grabs for leather and hit the horn with my chest,
I'm blind as a bat and my back is near broke,
When old Steamboat lets go with his very last stroke.

I was loose in the saddle and almost unbolt,
When he sets down his feet in a pile-driver jolt;
I cussed him one round but I've got to admit,
Old Steamboat's the bronc who just wouldn't quit.

STEAMBOAT made his debut at the Mountain and Plain Festival in Denver in 1901. Even though he had a lot to learn, he put on a good show. The next year he landed a berth at Cheyenne's Frontier Days where two champions got on his back, each confident of winning. Steamboat thought otherwise.

Erupting into a crow-hopping, pile-driving course, he swung his hips like a hula dancer. One peeler grabbed the horn, hooked his spurs in the cinch and hunched his head down between his shoulders.

In pinwheeling circles, Steamboat whirled to the right, then straightened out in a sudden about-face.

It was a gut-twisting pitch—so hard it threw his rider clear under Steamboat's belly.

From then on men burned with desire to ride him. Some traveled all the way from Canada only to lose their shirts.

Frank Stone drew Steamboat in 1904. As soon as he stepped up, Stone had to grab the rein and the horn.

Somehow, in the process, he lost control of his head. It snapped back and forth while Steamboat careened over the arena. At each side jerk, it twisted to right and to left.

Stone blacked out, staying up only by virtue of a death-like grip on the horn. When Steamboat finally threw him, Stone couldn't talk above a whisper for a month.

Finally in 1908, Dick Standley rode Steamboat to a standstill in Cheyenne. It rained very hard that morning and the buster knew his business. He forced Steamboat into fetlock deep mud. No horse can buck in mud or water.

A Colorado newspaper screamed "Foul Play." The spirit which imbued Steamboat would have built cities, opened new land, cleared forests, and watered deserts, according to the editorial. "But Steamboat was only a horse."

Yet what a horse!

After Standley's ride, others managed to stay up, but only after a hard fight. Jack Maring was one of these.

His was a wind-milling, jackknifing ride. Maring jammed his stomach on the saddle horn every time Steamboat's

(Continued on page 45)

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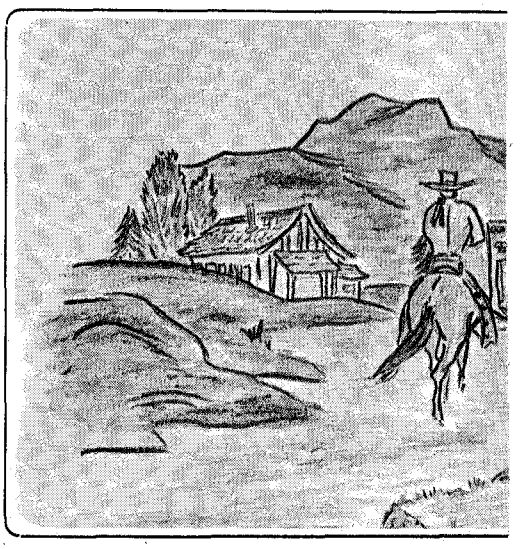
Sod House Frontier

BY SAMUEL O. SISCO

Here is an article on pioneer architecture by an author who has put in a lifetime of research on the pioneers and their way of life



Illustrated by the Author

THE PIONEERS who settled along the northeastern border of Kansas in the 1850's found stone and timber with which to build their homes. They set up simple one-room houses of stone or logs. Less often they built tent-shaped structures of poles thatched with grass, called "hay houses." These flimsy dwellings were little more than "straws in the wind" and were abandoned as soon as possible, yet they served a valuable purpose until more substantial houses could be erected. The first church services in Lawrence were held in a hay house.

The venturous settlers who pushed further westward to the treeless Plains found no stone, while the only timber was scrubby willows and cottonwoods along the shallow, trickling streams. Faced with the utter lack of conventional building material, they were forced to use the only material available—the earth itself. So, born of desperate necessity, the dugout came into existence—a sod-covered hole at one time outnumbering any other kind of dwelling in western Kansas.

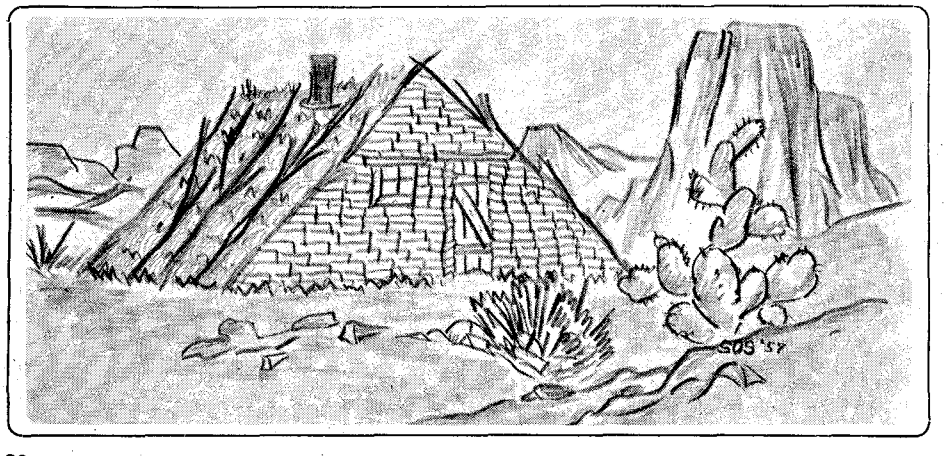
When the hardy settler began the slow, stubborn conquest of the vast prairie lands, he found at hand material for shelter and fuel. Buffalo chips and prairie grass served for his fuel; the dugout and the sod house provided his shelter. Where timber was available, it was only natural for the people to make the conventional log house. Even in the eastern part of the trans-Missouri-Red River territories, however, dugouts and makeshift, hay-covered, sod structures were used at first for shelter. As life and settlement crept forever westward and timber became more scarce, the homesteaders came to depend more and more on grass and soil for their homes. The typical prairie home was made of sod or was dug out of the side of a hill or ravine.

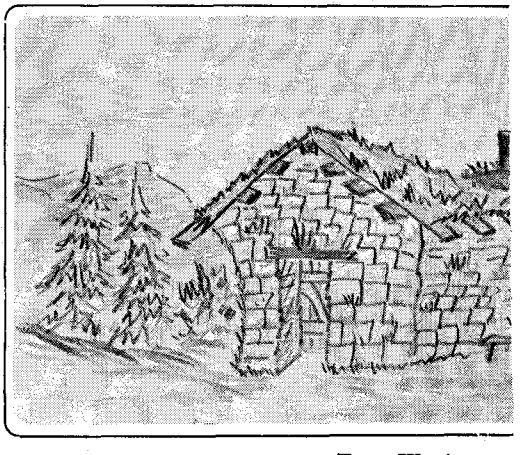
It was customary for the pioneer upon locating his homestead to arrange a temporary shelter until the permanent dwelling was ready for occupancy. When the wagon was pulled to a halt, the head of the family took out a spade and began to construct the dwelling. Since the dugout was more easily made than the sod house and many pioneers were anxious to get settled and plant crops, the dugout was their first shelter out of the wagon. Sometimes a hole was dug in the ground and covered with canvas or sheets, thus supplying the necessary shelter. Mr. and Mrs. B. L. Norton, of Fillmore County, Nebraska, made their first home by sewing four sheets together for a tent.

The dugout was a room dug in the side of a hill or ravine. A few rails or posts used from the torn-apart wagon served to make a door frame and possibly a window. The door, of course, opened out into the ravine. The front wall was made of square cut turf, or logs if they were obtainable. A roof sloping back onto the hill was made of poles or logs covered over with brush, a layer of prairie grass thick enough to hold dirt, and finally, a layer of dirt over the grass. In the few days required for excavating the dugout, the family, meanwhile, lived in the covered wagon box while the father used the running gears to haul the logs, poles, brush, and grass needed for the roof and front of the dugout. The mother of the family did her cooking by a campfire and the family slept in the wagon or other temporary abode.

The dugout by no means was ideal, however, for after a rain the high water often drove the occupants from their home. It was also necessary to dig a trench from the dwelling to the drainage

Below Left: Sod-roofed cottage. Built by runaway slaves during 1835. Roof was held in place by felled trees and leaned against sods. Below Center: Sod house school typical of Wyoming as well as Nebraska schools in the Eighties. Slabs were cut from the





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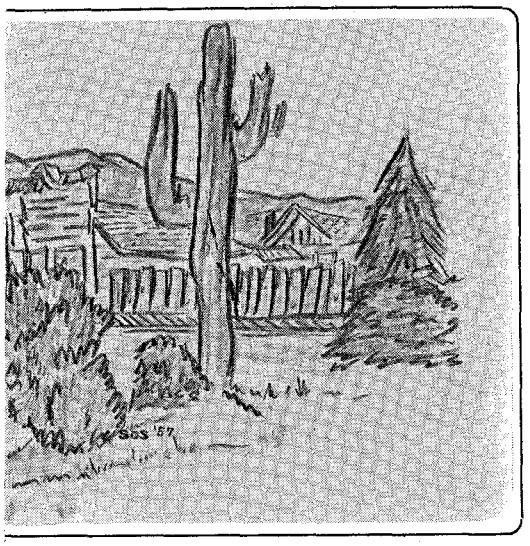
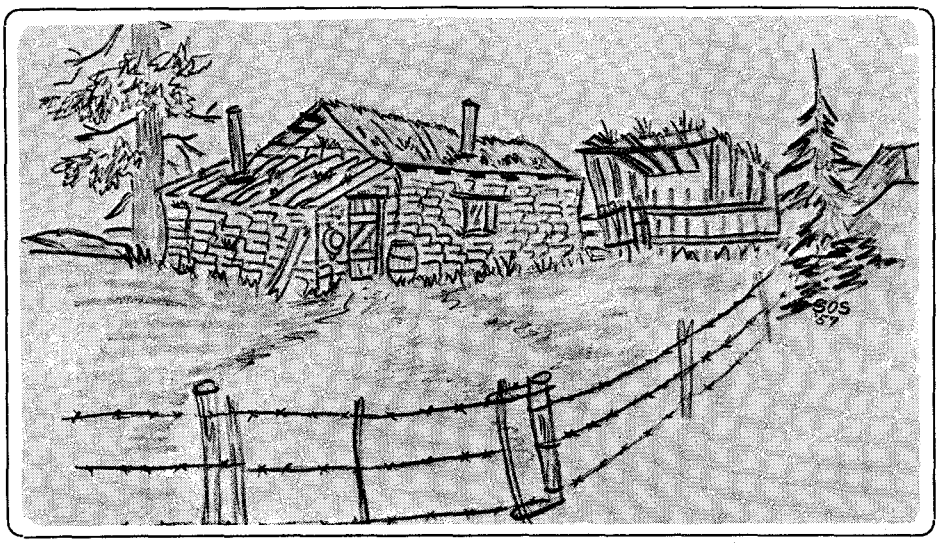




Above Left: A typical sod house town. Above Right: Sod house of a richer vein—a built-on. These were carved out of the rolling prairie. Spring made the prairie an enchanted place, but summer transformed it into a miserable hell by a burning sun and hot winds.

level to carry off the water from the dugout floor, thus bringing to life a frog pond in the front yard, making a breeding place for mosquitoes in summer and a very unhealthful environment. Even in dry weather the dugout was pretty dirty.

SOD HOUSES, or "soddies" were built with heavy slabs of top soil bound together by roots of growing grass. The "soddy" was box-like, squat, and dingy, its roof pitched at no greater angle than was required to shed rain. Not infrequently a combination sod house and dugout was made. The sod house, although a spot harder to build, was much more satisfactory and lasted some years and was used widely in the eastern portion of the prairie states . . .

A few sod houses were in use as late as 1939, but the rare soddy that stands today is preserved largely because of its historical interest. There are Kansans, however, who still remember how to build a soddy. In 1933, when living quarters had to be provided for a Civilian Conservation Camp stationed near Dodge City, soddy experts were found who built satisfactory barracks of earth.

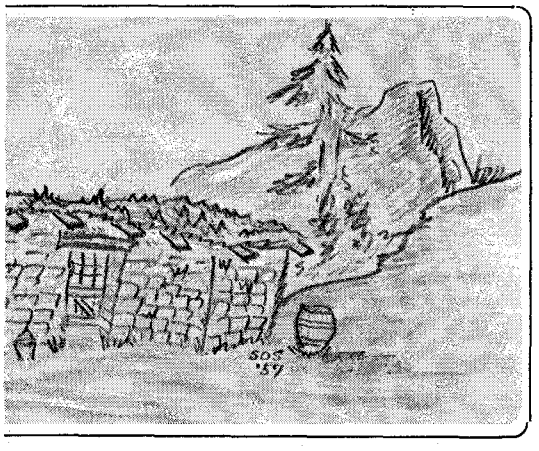
The whole blasted thing, as one pioneer said, was "made without mortar, square, plumb, or greenbacks." All that was needed was a pair of willing hands, and since many pioneers came west with only this asset and a wagon cover, they went to work.

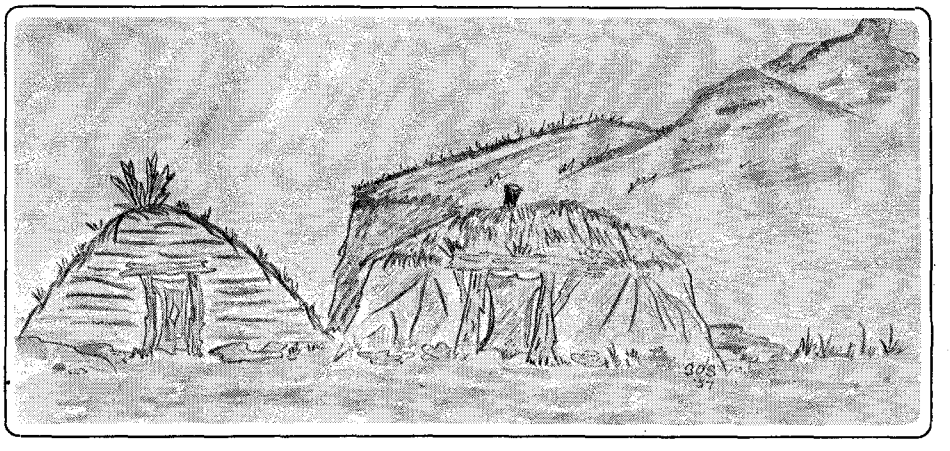
A spade was used to cut the sod into bricks about three feet long, the bricks then being carried to the building site by wagon bed or by a float made of planks or even the forks of a tree. To start the first layer of the wall, the three-foot bricks were placed side by side around the foundation except where the door was to be made. Clarence Babcock of Harpe, Kansas, stated he drew the line for his soddy wall after dark so it could be located by the north star. When the first layer of bricks was laid, the cracks were then filled with dirt and two more layers were placed on these. The joints here were broken as in brick laying. Every third course was laid crosswise of the others to bind them together. The process was naturally continued until the dirt wall was high enough to walk beneath and high enough to put a roof on the structure. A door frame and two window frames were set in the wall and the sod built around them at the proper time . . . with no wood around, and the wagon cut up for building, it did make a pioneer set down his roots with his soddy. Sometimes he, if lucky, drove hickory withes down into the wall as a sort of reinforcement. The gables were built up of sod or frame according to the means of the settler. With the not-so-rich settler, he had to build his roof in the crudest manner. A forked post set in each end of the cabin furnished a support for the ridge pole. Pole rafters were placed across the gables and a sheet of brush over the poles; a layer of prairie grass covered this, and over all this sod was placed. Naturally, the pioneer who could afford it put a frame roof on his sod house. When he could do this, sheeting was nailed on the rafter poles and tar paper spread over the sheeting boards. Practicality was the order of the times. The four walls were unadorned save by openings to provide the light and entrance; the roof was designed to shut out the elements; reasonable comfort was the ultimate aim of the builder.

EVEN over the wooden roofed soddy, sods thinner than those used to cover the side walls were laid with grass side down on the roof; the cracks were filled with fine clay. The roofs had to be renewed from time to time from rains carrying the dirt away, and in no time at all great growths of sunflowers and grass popped up on the roofs. If the woman of the soddy wanted her home to be plastered, a mixture of clay and ashes was used. If she wanted a smooth finish, the builder took a spade and hewed the wall to a smooth finish. If she wanted two rooms, the soddy was frequently divided into two by hanging a piece of rag carpet or quilt or blanket from a rafter pole and letting it dangle . . . thus the homemaker had two rooms.

(Continued on page 32)

prairie, piled one upon the other and roofed with a few planks or poles and another layer of sod. Below Right: Dugout and earth lodge. One is dug out of the side of a hill while on the other, the sod is piled on top of the earth like a mound.





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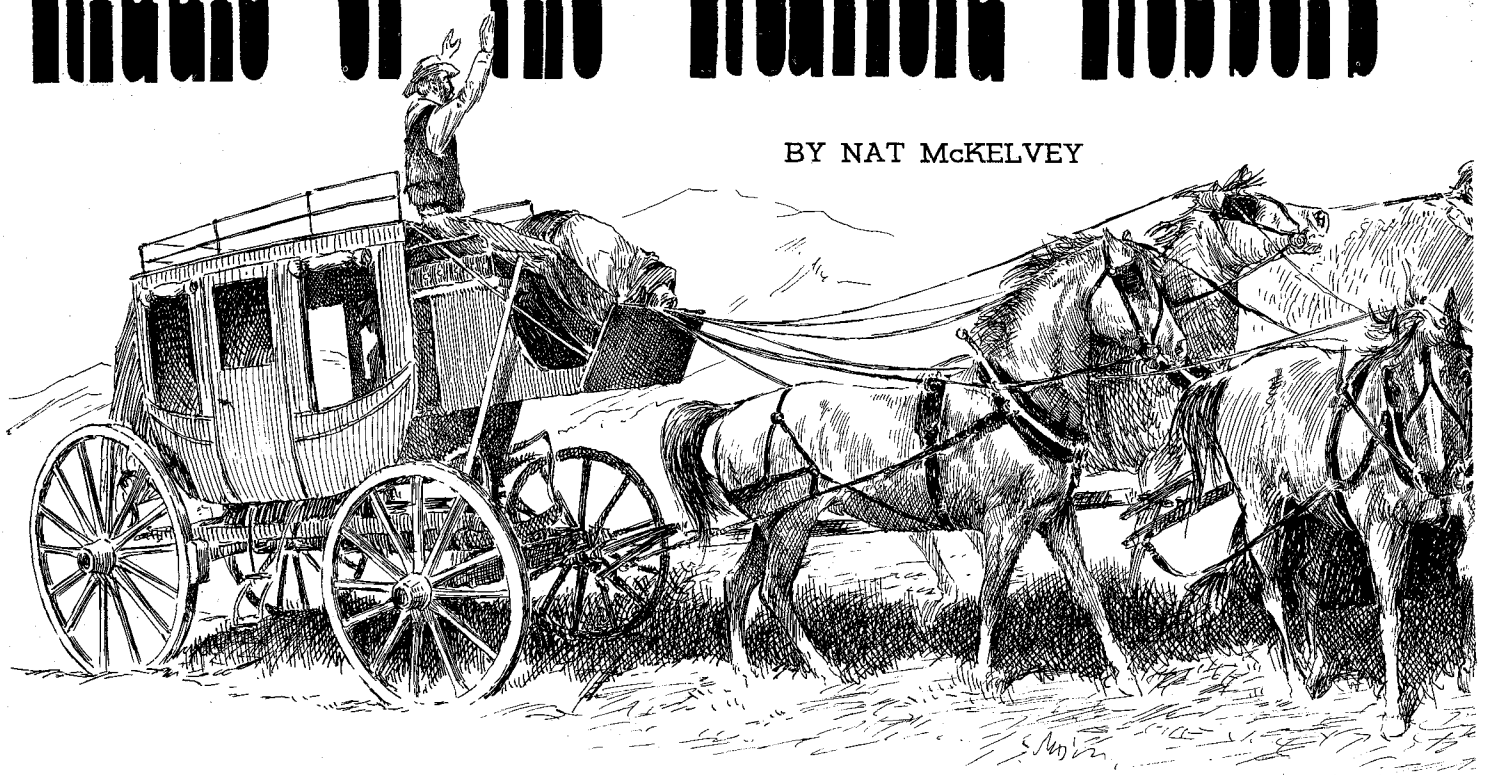
Riddle of the Redfield Robbers

BY NAT McKELVEY



WELL, who is the leader of this mob?"

Lem Redfield, co-founder of the Arizona town of Redington, asked this question just before he died inside the Florence jail on the morning of September 3, 1883.

Wealthy and respected, Redfield put his query to a crowd of one hundred Florence citizens minutes before they hanged him and old Joe Tuttle to the rafters of the local lock-up. Accused of implication in a stage robbery in which Johnny Collins, a Wells, Fargo guard, died, Redfield remained calm and fearless. He asked his one question, got no answer, and died like a man. No court tried him, for the people of Florence did not give the courts a chance.

Records of the day indicate that the alleged evidence against Redfield was purely circumstantial. Indeed, the Redfield affair suggests that many a pioneer lies in Boot Hill, victim of mob violence, because good citizens, unsure of their facts, were afraid to trust justice to the courts. Perhaps they feared the courts would actually mete out justice and a prize suspect would go free.

Redfield's difficulty began on the evening of August 10, 1883. At that moment, the Florence-Globe stage clattered out of Riverside, thirty miles east of Florence on the Gila River. On the box was veteran whip Watson Humphrey. Beside him, guarding monies belonging to the Pioneer Mining Company and the Stonewall Jackson Mine, sat Wells, Fargo shotgun messenger, thirty-three year old Johnny Collins.

Scarcely a mile and a half out of Riverside, all hell broke. Two men leaped from the roadside bushes, guns blazing. Collins, his jaw and neck riddled by buckshot, slumped dead in the boot, sprawling over the strong box as if to protect it, even in death. Bullets continued to whine and ricochet until Humphrey, the driver, yelled:

"For God's sake, stop shooting. You have killed one man, what more do you want!"

The two masked hold-up men, one a shorty, the other over six feet tall, turned wordlessly, drew beads on the stage horses, felling one wheel and one lead horse. Then they examined the stage. Inside, they found Felix LeBlanc, the only passenger, a twenty-six year old stage-line stationkeeper whose post was Riverside.

Complying with the bandits' request, LeBlanc climbed from the stage, hands over his head, his mouth working like a phonograph:

"Don't shoot, boys. I'll give up. Don't shoot, boys, I'll give up. Don't shoot, boys . . ."

"Throw down the express box," countered the thieves, "and be quick about it."

LeBlanc tried to move the heavy box, but the dead guard's body lay on top of it. Humphrey asked to move Collins' corpse.

"Let him lie where he is," snarled the road agents, "and get that box out now or we'll put holes through you s.o.b.'s!"

Sweating, LeBlanc and Humphrey wrestled the box to the ground. To LeBlanc, the thugs handed an axe, telling him:

"Break the box, and don't fool around."

Three times LeBlanc wielded the axe and three times the strong box did not yield. With a threat, the bandits urged him to greater efforts.

"If you don't get that open on the next crack," they promised, "we'll blow your brains out!"

On the fourth blow, LeBlanc managed to spring the hasp. Then he and Humphrey complied with a curt order to hit the road toward Cane Springs and keep going on pain of death.

AT CANE SPRINGS, three miles from the hold-up, Humphrey and LeBlanc met the downstage from Globe, actually a buckboard with several passengers. McKenny, the buckboard driver, decided that, for safety reasons, he and his passengers, together with LeBlanc and Humphrey, would camp overnight on the spot, posting guards.

Saturday morning, the group high-tailed it to the scene of the crime. Collins, the dead guard, still lay on the stage boot, face down, his shotgun in the dust to the rear of the vehicle where he had dropped it when the buckshot ripped away his face. Under the rifled express box, LeBlanc found twelve dollars of his own money which he had thrown down on order of the robbers. In their haste, they had failed to pick it up.

News of the hold-up reached Florence at ten o'clock Saturday morning when Humphrey and LeBlanc caromed into the sheriff's office. Hurriedly, a posse took trail, but their zeal for the chase quickly cooled when they made a persuasive discovery. On the route, they found a sack containing $720 in gold.

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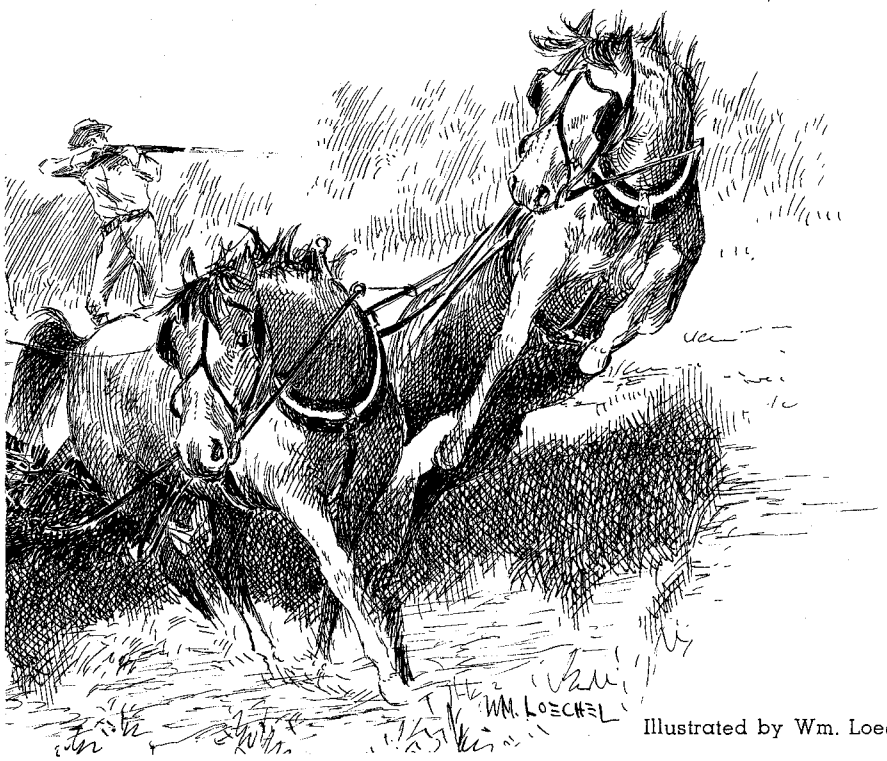
Here is a grim and chilling picture of "frontier justice" in action



Illustrated by Wm. Loechel

According to unpublished memoirs of George A. Brown, Wells, Fargo agent at Florence, one of the bandits had dropped the treasure during the get-away. Brown says that the posse scooped up the money, beat a hasty retreat to Riverside, where they blew it, laying the dust in their throats at Charlie Putnam's saloon.

Wells, Fargo called in special investigator John N. Thacker. A second posse headed by Sheriff A. J. Doran, of Florence, and including Under Sheriff Scanland and Deputy Fred Adams, took the trail. Meanwhile, J. P. Gabriel, a mining man, began a separate investigation, unauthorized but fruitful.

From Brown, the trackers learned that the outlaws had gotten, in addition to the $720 in gold, two sacks weighing sixty pounds each, and each containing one thousand silver dollars. In their reckless flight, they overlooked $620 in currency.

At the robbery scene, Sheriff Doran and his group uncovered a profusion of clues. One of the stage horses that had not been shot was missing. In the bushes, where the robbers had hitched their own horses while awaiting the stage, lay a pair of leather saddle bags, a belt full of Winchester cartridges, a package of tea, a loaf of bread, and a homemade dirk knife.

Tracking carefully, the posse discovered that the bandits had rocketed away from the scene of the crime by crossing hills to the San Pedro road, two miles above Riverside. At this point, the sheriff found a nickle-plated Winchester shell. A confusion of horse-shoe prints and footprints suggested that the quarry had stopped here to make two packs of their loot, strapping them to the stolen stage horse.

At Dudleyville, a mile south of the Gila River, on the San Pedro, Sheriff Doran located ranchers who had seen two men and a pack-horse pass through at a gallop. Five miles above Dudleyville, Doran lost the trail. Here the bandits entered wooded country, their tracks obliterated by bear grass that grows thickly in forests of oak, juniper, cedar, and manzanilla.

FIVE MILES from where he lost the trail, Doran learned that two men had galloped by, this time without a pack-horse. He deduced that they had probably killed the horse, although the animal was not found, and had buried the loot in the woods. About five a.m. on Sunday, two horsemen whizzed by the Perdue ranch as though their saddles were on fire. Mrs. Perdue saw them and told the sheriff. But, above Redington, which lies on the east slope of the Catalina Mountains, about fifty miles from Tucson, Sheriff Doran completely lost contact with the fugitives.

Meanwhile, Gabriel, the mining man, had been sniffing around Florence. From townsfolk, he learned that an unsavory character, variously known as Jack Averill, Jack Elmer or Almer, and Red Jack, had been hanging around the stage office.

On the day of the robbery, Red Jack, lounging in the depot, could not overlook the fact that the Wells, Fargo strong box was so heavy that it required two men to lift it aboard the stage. Jack bought a ticket, taking on the stage with him a saddle and bridle.

From LeBlanc, Gabriel learned that Red Jack had sung loudly when the stage passed a huge mesquite tree near Riverside. Under the tree lolled two hard case characters who, apparently, could see and hear Jack as the stage rattled by. Gabriel deduced that Jack's song was a signal to the bandits that this stage held real priority plunder.

At Evans and LeBlanc's station at Riverside, the stage halted to change horses and allow passengers to eat. Red Jack debarked. According to Gabriel, Jack fired a question at the station agent:

"Did two men leave a horse for me here?"

"Nope," replied the agent, and then ducked a torrent of foul language.

Red Jack raved about the treachery of the friends who had failed to provide him a horse and swore that he would get even. He stomped out of the depot, leaving his saddle, but taking his bridle with him. On foot, he disappeared in an upriver direction.

At Dudleyville, Sheriff Doran learned that a local lad had taken Red Jack upriver to Capt. Cage's ranch. Handing the boy fifteen dollars, Jack reportedly said:

"I've got to get to Redfield's tonight if I have to steal a horse to do it!"

At Capt. Cage's, Lem Redfield's nephew, Frank Carpenter, blundered into the picture. By his own statement, he wished his uncle ill, so he acquired a horse, giving it to Red Jack in full knowledge of Jack's unsavory reputation.

Having lost Jack and the trail, Sheriff Doran began a systematic examination of every ranch in the hold-up vicinity. At seven p.m. Sunday, he pulled up with his posse at the Redfield place. Inside, he found Joe Tuttle and Lem Redfield, but not a trace of Red Jack. In a manure pile, behind the Redfield house, Doran uncovered a shotgun and a few shells, loaded with buckshot. On this evidence, he arrested Redfield and Tuttle, who made no move to fight.

TAKING his prisoners to Dudleyville, Doran picked up Redfield's nephew for questioning. The youth, Carpenter, seeing the pair of saddle bags found by Deputy Scanland at the robbery, as they hung over Scanland's horse, chortled:

"Lem, these fellows got your saddle bags."

"Shut up," Redfield reportedly answered.

On Redfield's nephew, Doran's men found eight, shiny silver dollars. History does not record that he explained their presence. Shortly, Joe Tuttle showed Thacker, the Wells, Fargo detective, where the bandits had buried $1,992 in silver. With Carpenter's eight dollars this totaled $2,000, the exact amount lifted in the stage hold-up.

In Florence, another act in the owlhoot melodrama unfolded when Coroner Henry Schoshausen held an inquest into the death of Johnny Collins, the Wells, Fargo guard.

On the stand, Watson Humphrey, the driver, testified: "I saw only two robbers. I did not know either of them."

Humphrey did not identify Redfield as one of the men who held up the stage. Nevertheless, Redfield, Tuttle, and Carpenter languished in the Florence jail, while the Florence Weekly *Enterprise* began printing inflammatory statements.

(Continued on page 30)

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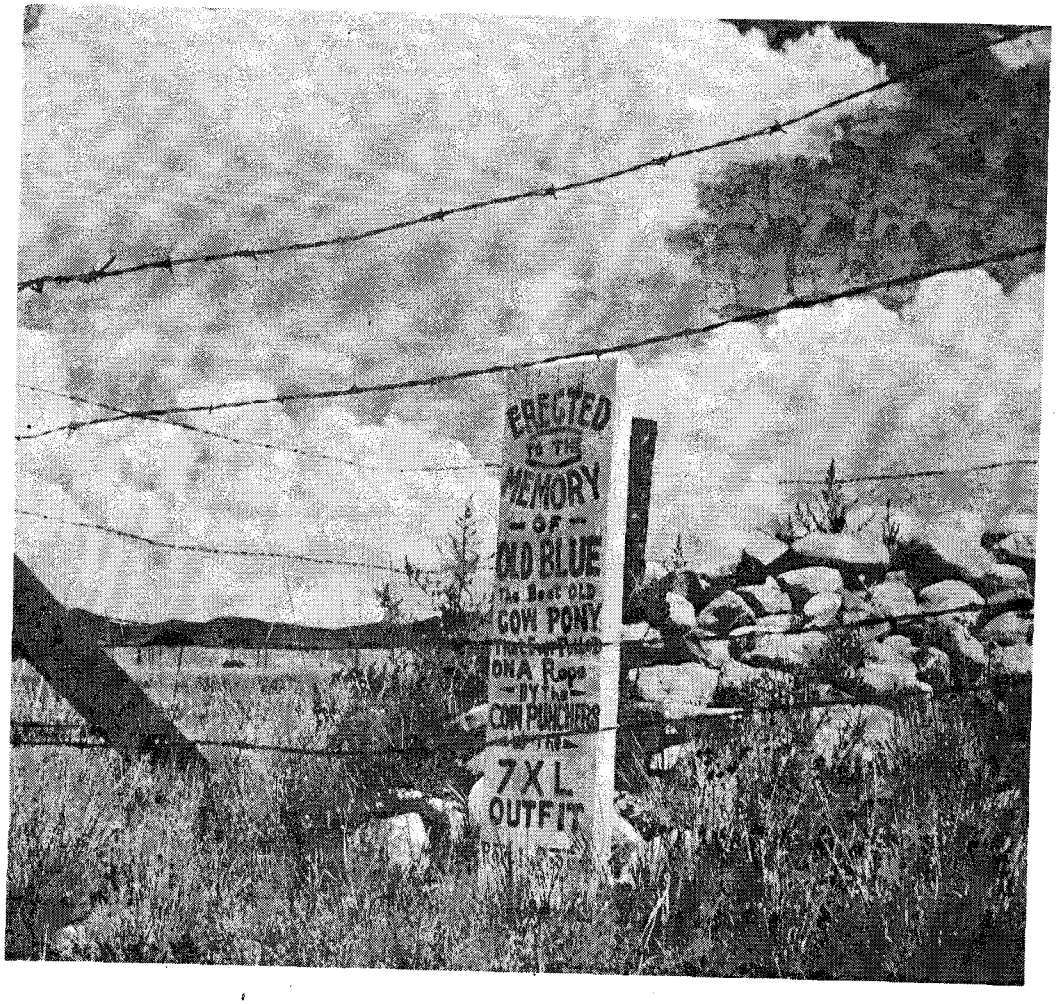

Wild Old Days

OLD BLUE

BY WILLIAM HARNIN

A few yards north of the Wyoming-Colorado state line on U. S. Highway 85 a mound of stones lies half-hidden in the bunch grass and tumbleweeds. Over the mound a wooden slab bears an inscription beginning:

ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF OLD BLUE . . .

Here, in the western range country that keeps his memory alive, numberless cowpunchers have built a touching monument to this stouthearted ranch pony. Each of the stones in the mound bears a name scratched with a knife or a horseshoe nail: Don, Dick, Charley, Ernest, placed lovingly upon the growing pile by working cowhands and rodeo riders who won't forget Old Blue.

Old Blue was a rancher's kind of horse. Originally a mustang on the wind-scrubbed Wyoming plains, he was trapped and broken by punchers on the 7XL Ranch near Cheyenne, Wyoming, more than forty years ago. His dam was a ranch Percheron, his sire a mustang, wild as the Wyoming wind.

After being broken to the saddle, Old Blue—named for his blue roan color—became one of a string of horses assigned to Gil Prentiss, youthful son of the ranch manager. The boy-owner and his horse made several sheep drives together, one of which lasted eight months. The drive began in northern New Mexico, led across the length of Colorado, and ultimately into Wyoming.

The 7XL spread, at one time the largest operating stock outfit in Wyoming, kept a remuda of 3,000 horses to run herd on 25,000 cattle and 125,000 sheep. The owner of the 7XL, Francis E. Warren, a U. S. Senator from Wyoming, was reputed to be "the largest sheep owner since Abraham."

In later years, Old Blue was one of a large string of horses used to trail a herd of cattle across the open prairies to the Sioux Reservation near Rosebud, South Dakota. At one time during the drive the herd stampeded. Old Blue and his rider, young Prentiss, narrowly escaped death by outrunning the charging animals. When his life on the open range was ended by advancing age, Old Blue finally became a decoy horse and lured the remnants of the wild mustang herds that still roamed the vast open spaces of the Warren spread. Another of his chores was dragging refuse carts or buckboards, or being trotted in the ranch yard as a gentle mount for the owner's grandchildren.

When Old Blue died some years ago, cattlemen from distant ranches rode to the 7XL and buried him. The funeral service was preached by John Bullene, a 7XL cowhand, out of a full heart. Now, in annual tribute, the weathered wooden slab is freshly painted every fall at roundup time, to insure that Old Blue will never rest in a forgotten grave.

The epitaph reads with simple rangeland eloquence: "ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF OLD BLUE. The Best Old Cow Pony That Ever Pulled On A Rope. By the Cowpunchers of the 7XL Outfit. Rest in Peace and Good Will."

STORM ON THE RANGE

BY GEORGE PHILLIPS

IT'S mighty queer how a happening will impress itself on one's mind and lie there quiet and unnoticed for many a year. Then some casual word is spoken or some date is mentioned and that long-ago occurrence will pop up in one's memory as clearly as if it happened yesterday. Now, I've worked on many roundups in the old days, but rarely has one left an impression worth remembering.

However, there is one Texas roundup—or rather, an attempted roundup—which occurred sixty-two years ago, in April of 1895, that I just plumb can't forget.

The Creek wagon—a pool outfit—was rounding up, branding and holding strays. I was repping. We had three more rounds to make; San Martine, Seven Heart, and the dog holes. Then the Figure 4 was to take over and carry on north and east. We had been on the work about a month and had had fine weather—no rain, no dust storms. We were a contented bunch of about thirty cow waddies.

About sunup we had the drive started; the herd, chuck wagon, and remuda were well on their way. It was one of the easiest drives on the entire circuit—a pasture fence on one side and the Texas and Pacific Railroad fence on the other, and, in a V shape, the roundup grounds at the point of the V.

That country is a rolling plain with no trees and very little brush. In topping a ridge, we could see small bunches of cattle moving toward the roundup grounds—a pretty sight. About 10 a.m. we were closing in with about five or six miles to go. Not a breath of air was stirring, but we spotted a storm cloud coming toward us out of the west. It didn't seem to be moving very fast and we figured we could make the roundup before it struck.

We were wrong; in thirty minutes the storm hit us full blast. I have experi-

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enced many storms on the range, but that was the worst. Gravel the size of buckshot peppered us in the face and the wind howled like a million lost souls in perdition. The storm came in terrific gusts. When it cleared a moment, one could see his horse's head and the next second 'twas black as the inside of a bull's belly. We shut our eyes and kept our horses headed straight into it.

Some folks might wonder why we didn't turn tail and hunt a ranch house, but that ain't the way the old-time cowpunchers operated. A cowhand's home was the chuck wagon which contained his bed roll and war bag and that was his Home Sweet Home for about ten months of the year. Come hell or high water, your peeler hiked for home. I don't know how we ever made it, but we were a tough breed as also were our horses. We tied our hats down with our handkerchiefs, and if the worst came we'd let the head go with the hanky. Nobody worried a mite; in those days we lived for the present minute alone and to hell with the future.

THE cook had camped the wagon at a little adobe hut enclosing a spring. The walls broke the force of the wind, but nothing except a perfect vacuum could have kept out the dust. Of all the gravelly, dirty messes I ever saw, that dinner was the worst! The cook, bless his crusty old heart, had built a big pot of spotted pup and a scoundrel too **(Ed. note: For the benefit of the uninitiated, spotted pup was rice pudding with raisins, and a scoundrel, of course, the famed sonuvagun stew)**, but when the pot covers were removed for helpings, both dishes soon tasted alike—horrible! 'Twas like the Bible story of the loaves and the fishes, only *this* food wasn't blessed—just the opposite. Each time the pot lids were removed and the dust poured in, the vessels got thicker and fuller with dirt. Soon the coffee wouldn't pour, and then the cussin' really busted loose. You can starve a cowhand and pretty nigh work him to death and he won't complain a bit, but take his coffee away from him and, *amigo,* you got a row on your hands!

Man, what a howler that storm turned out to be! Section houses on the Texas and Pacific were blown down, trains were stalled, and cow outfits, herds, and remudas scattered all over the country. We sat around the hut smoking and swapping lies until four in the afternoon, when the boss said: "Fellers, I been worryin' about our two herders. I ain't got the heart to ask any of you boys to go to their relief, but I'd sure be mighty pleased if somebody would volunteer."

We looked at each other a minute, listening to the wind screeching overhead and the sand scratching at the door and windows. Then Charley Tinnin, of the Figure 4 outfit, said, "I'll go." I spoke up, "I'll side you, Charley." Charley grinned. *"Muchas gracias, compadre.* I was afraid I'd get lonely out there all by myself."

A plain cattle trail ran alongside the fence, and in the four or five miles we traveled we must have edged into that wire fence a hundred times. We knew if we got too far from that fence we'd be plenty lost. The horses knew it too; they stuck to that fence like *cholla* burrs to a burro's tail.

We rode smack into the herd before we realized it. At the far side we found the herders, huddled up in some brush, suffering from the wind and stinging sand but okay. We hunkered down with 'em and prepared to sweat it out.

Along toward nightfall the wind began to lull and the herders made a brush fire and got the coffeepot to boiling. Charley and I made a solemn vow over a cup of coffee that we'd never, *never* work on a ranch or even *look* at another cow for the rest of our lives—and, believe it or not, we stuck with our resolutions until the next day.

At that, we had it soft compared to one feller in our outfit—a young New Yorker who had come West for his health. He'd been riding a gentle old horse, and when he'd tire he'd ride in the wagon. The poor feller had tuberculosis, and at times he'd gasp for breath and cough and curse the storm and the country and the God that made it—if He did. He was well educated and adept in the use of profanity. We poor uneducated cow servants just stood around in admiration when he sounded off. We had always used cuss words in handling cattle, but this Eastern feller was 'way out of our class. With his vocabulary and our experience, we could all have been top-hands.

Our tenderfoot boarded the eastbound Texas and Pacific the next day for New York. We heard afterward that the poor cuss just barely made it on his feet, and in a few days was gathered to his Maker and the green celestial fields where the sand storms bloweth not. We were sure sorry to learn of his passing. Seems like a young feller with a vocabulary like his might have been spared to give unlettered lads like us the benefit of his knowledge.

Most of those old waddies have passed on, but a few of them are still encumbering the earth and poking around after cattle. I calculate that all of us still alive will never forget that fifth day of April, 1895.

THE GYPSY CARDS

BY GENE SPERRY

IT was a time of tension and excitement for the citizens of Canon City, Colorado. For several days a gunfight had been brewing between a cowboy and a gambler, and the situation was finally moving toward a showdown shootout between the pair.

Perhaps the whole incident, stemming from the mysterious appearance of an ace that was said to have come from the bottom of the deck, would have been forgotten by the principals if friends had not kept the feud hot. The long summer had been dull that year of 1889, and the boys figured a gunfight would break the monotony.

For several days the two had glowered at each other when they met in the dusty street of the town, but neither made a move to draw. Finally the cowboy, Red Ivan, challenged the gambler.

"In three days, *mi amigo,"* Pedro Arondondo softly answered. "I have something of utmost importance to do first."

Ivan grudgingly assented to the delay, but asked why the gambler requested it.

"First I must read my gypsy cards," smiled Pedro.

And that was what he did, poring over the oddly designed cards spread before him on a saloon table. The gambler was white and tightlipped when he arose from the table after telling his own fortune. As if in a daze, he walked slowly out of the noisy saloon into the oven-hot street.

That night Arondondo went to see Henry Serlock, the local stonecutter, who was busy with his tools until dawn. The following morning Pedro bought a new suit from the owner of the general store, and they had a long talk.

By that time, curiosity was eating at the town's inhabitants. Several citizens questioned the stonecutter and the store owner, but neither would talk.

On the evening of the showdown, before going out into the street to meet his challenger, Pedro made a startling announcement to his friends: "Boys, I want you to remember that whatever happens tonight was foretold by the gypsy cards. They are never wrong."

The gambler pushed his way through the puzzled crowd, out into the deserted street. From the opposite direction, Red Ivan was coming slowly toward him. Both men drew in the same split-second, both fired simultaneously—but it was Pedro who fell into the thick dust, a bullet between his eyes. Ivan was unhit.

Arondondo was buried that night in the black suit he had bought the day before, and the stonecutter put up a headstone on the gambler's grave. Startled towns-folk read the inscription:

PEDRO ARONDONDO
BORN 1857—DIED 1889
DIED FROM BULLET WOUND
BETWEEN THE EYES
FIRED BY RED IVAN

"That's what I put on the stone the other night," Serlock said. "Pedro told me he read it all in his gypsy cards."

NERVI'S NERVE

BY HAL McCLURE

THERE were many odd characters attracted to California during the Gold Rush, but few could compete with the antics of the amazing storekeeper of Italian Bar.

Italian Bar was located on the Stanislaus River, a few miles north of Columbia, in the Southern Mines of the rich Mother Lode. Today, only a couple of tumbling walls mark its existence. But back in the 1850's it was booming, and furthermore it boasted Joaquin DeLuca, the balmy storekeeper.

DeLuca—called Nervi by everyone, for some unexplained reason—had settled in Italian Bar soon after the discovery of gold and had built a general store. DeLuca's store soon became the favorite hangout for all the miners of the area. Besides serving excellent spaghetti and brandy, Nervi entertained his patrons by playing a hand organ he had brought all the way from his native Boston.

Although he managed to gain a certain degree of prosperity, DeLuca never learned to read or write. His bookkeeping system was as strange to the uninitiated as Egyptian hieroglyphics. When one of his customers bought an article on credit, Nervi simply would draw a picture of it in his account book. And, at the end of the month, he would simply add up the column of drawings to figure out the bill.

The little Italian storekeeper would distinguish his customers by drawing a neat picture of a prominent landmark near his patron's camp or cabin. For example: if one of the miners lived under a tall pine, Nervi drew a tree; if another lived near a church, he'd draw a cross.

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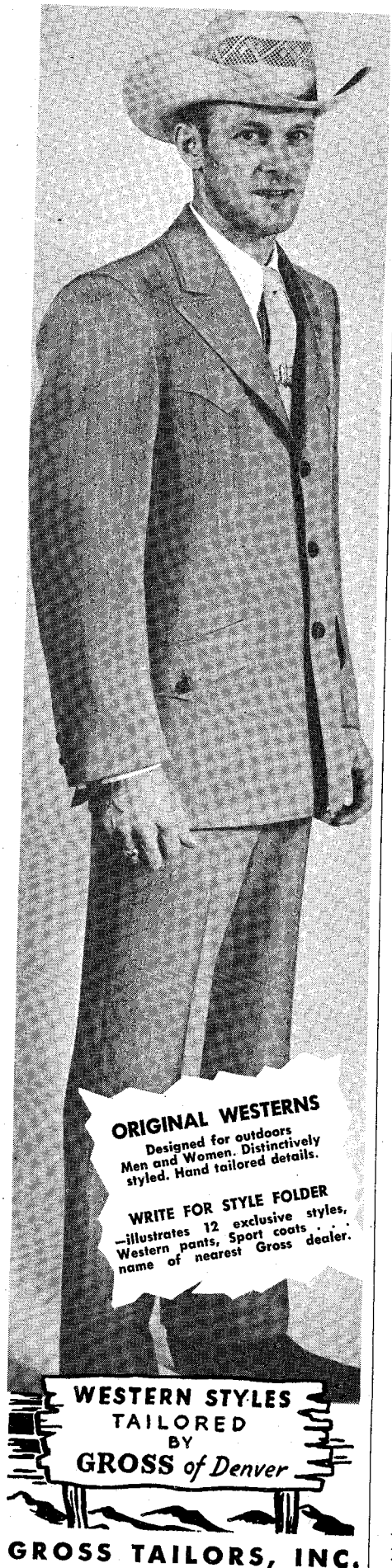


This bookkeeping system, though simple in structure, was not altogether foolproof. For instance, there was the time Nervi and two of his long-time customers almost came to a parting of the ways.

The two pocket miners came into the store one day to settle their account. Nervi hauled out his picture account book and started adding up the drawings. The customers heard him muttering, "One-a cheese."

"What did you say about a cheese?" demanded one of the miners.

"Sure, you gotta one-a cheese," replied the storekeeper.

The two miners looked at each other. "We didn't buy any cheese this month, and if you say we did you're a blamed liar!"

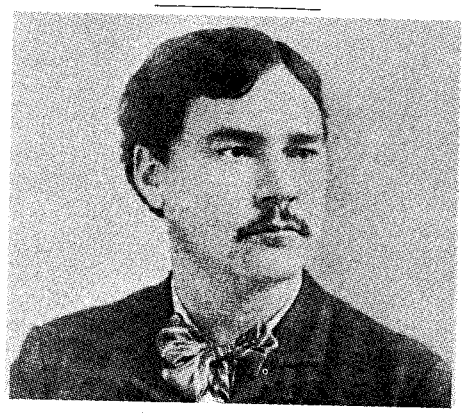
Nervi grew angry. He pointed indignantly to the account book and sputtered, "Looka dis, you welchers! Here's the entry I made when you boughta whole cheese."

The miners bent over the account book and saw a circle drawn under their symbol. There it was—unmistakably a picture of a whole cheese.

Suddenly, one of the miners remembered something. "Hey, Nervi, could that be the grindstone we got a couple weeks ago?"

Nervi looked closely at the circle drawn in the book, then smote himself on the forehead with his palm.

"*Santa Lucia!* I forgetta to put da hole in da grindstone!"



Elfego Baca

Slaughter Odds, 80 to 1!

(Continued from page 19)

dust and powder stains. He ignored the surviving Texans and walked straight to his friend Naranjo. "It is over, *verdad?*"

"*Si, compadre,*" replied Naranjo. "It is over!"

The stranger shook hands with Baca. "My name is Ross. Don Pedro deputized me to stop the riot. I'm mighty happy to see that I got here in time."

"Thank you, *senor.* It is good to be alive."

IT was very quiet in the plaza. The scorched branches atop the *jacal* roof still smoldered, filling the air with the pungent scent of the green mesquite. The quiet broke when Bill French said harshly, "We ain't givin' up yet. We'll take Baca off your hands in the morning and hang him at Point of Timber."

Ross promptly called French's hand. "I'm letting Baca keep his guns all the way to Socorro," he drawled. "You'll have to shoot it out with three of us."

Bill French cursed and turned away. Presently all the Slaughter men mounted their horses and rode off into the valley.

Later, Baca, Ross, Naranjo, and the few Texans still remaining, washed up at Milligan's back-room trough. Baca's former enemies threw a celebration that lasted through the night, but Elfego kept his guns handy and did little drinking. He told them the secret of his survival; how the *jacal* had been built with a floor that was fully a foot below ground level.

"When the bullets came like hail, I crouched against the dirt wall. So, too, I escaped the dynamite. I'm pretty lucky, *verdad?*"

In Socorro, where Ross took him for trial, Baca was twice tried and twice acquitted. The last verdict was justifiable homicide in defense of his life, and he was set free.

Despite a minor setback here and there, the indestructible Elfego lived for sixty red-blooded years. A fire engine ran him down in an Albuquerque street, but he recovered. A maniac stabbed him with an ice pick, but he survived. A drunken knife-fighter cut him up, but he stayed alive. He turned over his new automobile three times, and the wrecker towed it to a junk heap, a total loss. Still, he lived.

A dynamo of energy and ambition, Baca rose from cowhand to lawyer, from lawyer to sheriff in the toughest battleground in the world—New Mexico politics. A brilliant attorney, he fought many a case before the U. S. Supreme Court.

Shortly after the Frisco incident, an astounded and respectful citizenry elected Baca to the post of Sheriff of Socorro County. He called in his chief clerk and dictated a polite letter to a gang of outlaws who, until then, had defied arrest.

"Dear Sirs: I have a warrant here for your arrest. Please come in by March 15 and give yourselves up. If you don't, I will know that you intend to resist arrest and I will feel justified in shooting you on sight when I come after you. Yours truly, Elfego Baca, Sheriff."

Meekly the outlaws checked in before the appointed time. You could hardly have expected them to do otherwise, *verdad?*

Coming Up!

(Continued from page 2)

Dobie calls it "realistic reporting on Texas brush country work and men," and that sums it up perfectly.

NORM WILTSEY'S story of the Sioux, "Death on the North Plains," concludes with the tragic and bitter events that occurred after the annihilation of Custer and his command and the scattered flight of the allied tribes. The murder of Crazy Horse, the Ghost Dance troubles, the murder of Sitting Bull, and the Wounded Knee Massacre in December of 1890, bring the grim saga of the mightiest Plains tribe to a close.

Incidently, so many TW readers have expressed the wish to see the Indian Tribal Series in book form, we hope to find a publisher for it. Many of you missed the chapters on the Cheyennes and Nez Perces in Volumes 1 and 2, Numbers 2, 3 and 4. Therefore, if you wish to see the series preserved in permanent book form for your libraries, let us know. Your letters may be just what we'll need to swing a deal with a publisher.

Short subjects include L. W. Howard's "A Race With Death" (held over from the January-February issue), Wild Old Days, and the priceless dash of ginger added by the Truly Western column.

See you later, Podner . . .

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Truly Western

Old-timers' Corral

Editor, *True West:*

Mr. Glen T. Gough, of Topeka, Kansas, recently asked through your columns for information on how the pioneers lived. He certainly hit upon an interesting topic, for they had some very hard times.

I can tell him how they used to build a soddy. My family and I settled in the Sand Hill country of Northwestern Nebraska in 1885, when I was 14 years old. I helped my daddy build a sod house, and we lived in it for six years. The way to build a sod house is this:

Find a swale where the sod is good and tough. Take your breaking plow and plow the sod three inches deep and twelve inches wide. Then take a spade and cut in two-foot lengths. Lay it the same way you would lay bricks. Fill in the chinks with mud. When finished, you have a wall two feet thick which is warm in winter and cool in summer. Boards are used for the roof. Lap them the same way you would shingles and lay sod on top. Now you have a roof that will not leak. If you want it extra nice, plaster inside with clay. That's all there is to it.

R. L. Kennedy

Mr. Gough asks, "how did the pioneers dig a well?" Well, all it takes to dig a well is two men who are willing to work—one to dig and one to pull up the dirt.

What did we do for toothache? We let her ache!

How did we keep in fuel and supplies in the winter? For fuel in winter we burned hay in a hay burner. A hay burner is made like an old-fashioned wash boiler. It is about three feet deep. Tramp your hay into it good and hard. One load will burn about three hours. In the summer, of course, we burned buffalo chips.

On winter supplies: You had to get in your basic supplies in the fall. Traveling was tough in the winter and it was a long, hard trip to any town. You patched out your supplies by hunting, and if you were lucky you might get an antelope or a nice fat buffalo cow. Of course, by 1885 buffaloes were mighty scarce, and our best bet in the way of meat was antelope, jack rabbits, prairie chickens, etc.

The first year was always the hardest for the homesteader. After the second year he could raise most of his family's food.

Most of the people who came to Nebraska in those days had very little money or none at all and, as a consequence, had very difficult times. Often all a family had to eat was rabbits, prairie chickens, and corn pone. I have seen many changes in living conditions in my long lifetime, most of them for the better. Still, despite our hardships, frontier life was simpler and much less tense than life today.—R. L. Kennedy, R.D. 1, Box 334, Eureka, California.

Editor, Truly Western:

I enjoy *True West* and think it's tops for truth. What keeps it that way is the letters to the Editor in Truly Western. I may not be exactly an "old-timer" as I've lived here only 61 years, but I think I could be classed with Blanche Lovern as a "young old-timer." Blanche requested information on some of the riders of thirty or forty years ago in her recent letter to TW. While I knew several of the persons she mentioned, I can tell her what became of only one of them. That was Dave Whyte. Dave was my wife's brother, and he passed away in General Hospital, Los Angeles, December 4, 1956.

Dave, a great rider, won his first championship at Sheridan. I believe that was classed as the championship of the Northwest. Later on, Dave won the world's championship at Cheyenne, and in 1923 won the bronc riding championship at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

And now a word about the T.A. Ranch mentioned by Fay E. Smith in a letter some time ago. Fay says the T.A. Ranch is on Powder River, but that is an error; it's located on Crazy Woman Creek about thirteen miles south of Buffalo. Smith must have in mind the K.C. Ranch, where Nick Rae and Nate Champion were killed. That is on the middle fork of Powder River, 47 miles south of Buffalo. That's where the ruckus started and wound up at the T.A. We folks here at Buffalo don't have to rely entirely on books as to what happened then. There are several persons living here whose folks were involved in the trouble one way or another. One fellow I know took an active part. He would be a good man for some writer to interview before it is too late.

I have seen most of the fellows mentioned in your stories of the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang, but I was too young to remember much about their looks except for Tom O'Day and Tom Horn, and a few others who used to get their horses shod at my father's blacksmith shop. This was one of the first buildings in Kay Cee, named after the K.C. Ranch.—Bill Potts, 110 North Tisdale Street, Buffalo, Wyoming.

We are indebted to Mrs. Jerry Salisbury, 3915 South Howard Boulevard, Los Angeles, for the following newspaper clipping and photo of Dave Whyte.

"Dave Lee White, 62, a topnotch rodeo performer who later played in motion pictures, died December 4 (1956) of pneumonia in a Los Angeles hospital.

"He was born January 18, 1894, near Big Horn and attended Meade Creek and Big Horn schools. At an early age he began a career of bronc riding and at 17 joined Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

"White won his first riding championship at Sheridan, then added top laurels at Frontier Days in Cheyenne and other major rodeos, including Tulsa, Lewiston, and Pendleton. His greatest triumph was

(Continued on page 40)

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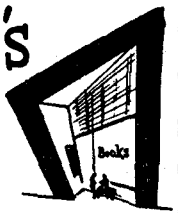

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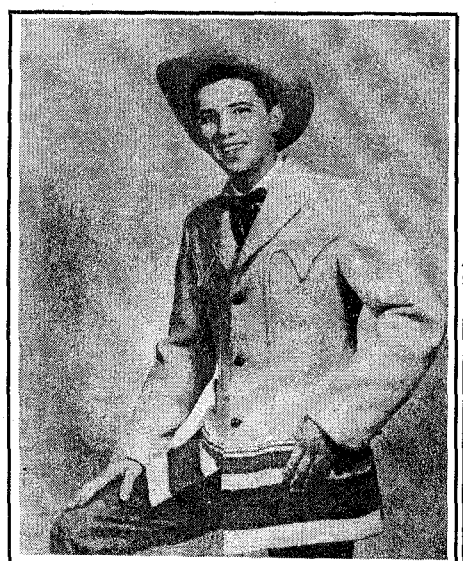

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Photos courtesy Arizona Pioneer's Historical Society

Left: Hon. A. J. Doran, Territorial Legislator and Sheriff of Pinal County came to Arizona in 1862 with California Volunteers. Right: Geo. A. Brown.

Riddle of the Redfield Robbers

(Continued from page 25)

The paper issued a purported confession by Joe Tuttle in which he is said to have declared that Lem Redfield furnished the axe with which the strong box was rifled; that Redfield gave the robbers provisions and horses after the crime; that Redfield killed the stage horse used for packing; that Redfield burned Tuttle's mask and buried his gun and shells; that Redfield was to swear that Tuttle was at the Redfield ranch at the time of the crime. In return for doing these things, according to Tuttle, Redfield was to receive a share of the loot.

Wrote the Florence Weekly *Enterprise:*

"Public sentiment runs unanimously in favor of hanging the robbers; and it has already been decided that, as soon as it shall be positively known that the prisoners are the guilty ones, they shall be taken out, given a fair trial before a citizen's committee and promptly executed. Justice through our courts is too uncertain."

Joe Tuttle named one Charlie Hensley as his accomplice in the actual crime. Brown, the Wells, Fargo agent at Florence, states categorically in his memoirs that Hensley was armed with a Winchester rifle, while Tuttle carried a shotgun. If so, Tuttle was the actual triggerman, for Guard Collins was blasted to sleep by buckshot.

Though Tuttle was the killer, the *Enterprise* chose to consider him less dangerous than Lem Redfield. Of Redfield the paper wrote:

"His wealth and position rendered him less liable to suspicion, while his superior intelligence made him capable of laying desperate and more ingenious plots."

Candidly, and, perhaps, gleefully, the *Enterprise* reported the prisoners' behavior, even attempting to assay the content of their minds. Everyone agreed that Redfield was game, but not so triggerman Tuttle. Of him the *Enterprise* said, in florid, frontier journalese:

"Guilt's iron fangs engrasp his shrinking soul!"

While the *Enterprise* speculated, proclaimed, and judged, the days flew by. Inevitably, the morning of September 3, 1883, rolled around. On this day, a posse of more than forty men, headed by U. S. Marshal W. J. Evans, and Lem's brother, Henry, rode into Florence.

TO SHERIFF DORAN, Marshal Evans handed a writ signed by Judge Pinney of Phoenix. The writ ordered Doran to release Redfield to the marshal for removal to Phoenix, the state capital. Doran didn't like it, declaring that the judge and the marshal had no jurisdiction. While Doran palavered with Florence big-wigs, the marshal's party lay back, awaiting a decision. One of his men is said to have remarked:

"Well, damn the sheriff, he had better release Lem. There are forty cowboys outside who can take Lem out if the sheriff refuses."

Angrily, Florence citizens countered: "Well you had better send after more, forty won't be enough!"

As Sheriff Doran pondered his problem, a hundred Florence men, armed but sober and orderly, surrounded the jail. Quickly, they overran the lockup, removed Redfield and Tuttle from their cells. Assertedly, because of Frank Carpenter's youth, the mob was content merely to admonish him to change his evil ways.

In the jail corridor, the lynchers adjusted hangmen's nooses about the necks of their victims. Tuttle kept whimpering, "Oh, my God, oh, my God." Redfield asked for the mob's leader, got no answer, and said no more. At nine-thirty a.m., the two men jigged away their lives at rope's end.

The *Enterprise* of September 8, 1883, described the lynchers as quiet, orderly, none drunk, and said they did their "work" efficiently, an indisputable truism.

With tongue in cheek, a coroner's jury declared that the two prisoners met death at the hands of "unknown parties." This in spite of the fact that no one in the mob wore a mask.

A month later, in October, 1883, Sheriff Bob Paul and posse, of Pima County, surprised Charlie Hensley and Red Jack near the Percy ranch, close to Willcox. In a running gunfight, the sheriff and his boys put bullet hole periods at the end of lawless careers for those two.

TODAY, among pioneers in southern Arizona, there is considerable doubt as to whether Lem Redfield met a just fate.

For one thing, immediately after the lynching, the *Tucson Daily Citizen* got into a hassle with the Florence *Enterprise* over whether the courts would have found Redfield guilty. The *Citizen* doubt-

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ed whether Redfield legally deserved hanging and referred to the lynchers as a "mob." With wounded civic pride, the *Enterprise* rejoined: "He was hung by respectable and representative citizens of Florence."

Then, in spite of its earlier pronouncement that Florence residents had decided to lynch the accused men, the *Enterprise* did a turnabout. On September 8, 1883, the paper declared:

"If no effort to remove Redfield from the county jail . . . and no threats of retaliation in the event of lynching had been made, the prisoners would not have been lynched."

MANY things mitigate in favor of Redfield's innocence:

1. He was a wealthy, respected, and influential rancher. With his brother, Henry, he created a cattle empire by hard work, fighting Indians, desperadoes, and such natural disasters as floods. He didn't need money, and it seems unlikely that a man with his adventurous background would have been interested in robbing for thrills.

2. Admittedly, a "man of superior intelligence," he certainly would not have surrounded himself by helpers so stupid that they literally cascaded clues at the robbery site, leaving a trail a blind steer could have followed right to the Redfield ranch.

3. Because of his wealth, Redfield surely would not have ventured into a $2,000 robbery, the proceeds of which had to be split five ways.

4. There is no record that Redfield was ever implicated in or even accused of any previous crime.

5. Clearly, he was not at the scene of the holdup.

6. The shotgun found in his manure pile was never connected with anyone, definitely not with Redfield. It could have been buried by any desperado, since the Redfield ranch, and many others, lay on a route to Mexico, traveled by unsavory characters in a hurry.

7. There was bad blood between Redfield and his nephew, Frank Carpenter. Carpenter regarded Redfield as a domineering autocrat, and the older man considered his nephew immature and impulsive.

8. Redfield's saddle bags, found at the scene of the crime, could have been stolen or lost. His reaction to Carpenter's remark about them, could have been made in anger or in honest fear, since even an innocent man could have foreseen how damaging their presence appeared.

9. The people of Florence were too anxious to keep the Redfield case from a jury, suggesting that they felt the evidence insufficiently conclusive.

10. The respected Judge Pinney showed sufficient doubt of Redfield's guilt to issue a writ to remove him from the jurisdiction of the Florence people.

11. In the 1930's, Charles Bayless, pioneer rancher of Redington and Tucson, publicly declared his opinion that Redfield was innocent, a victim of circumstances.

12. The presence of Tuttle at the Redfield ranch is easily explained by western courtesy. It was customary in the old west to refrain from asking travelers their right names or destination. "Light down and rest your saddle," sums up the code of western hospitality.

13. The evidence against Redfield was nearly all circumstantial and partly based on hearsay.

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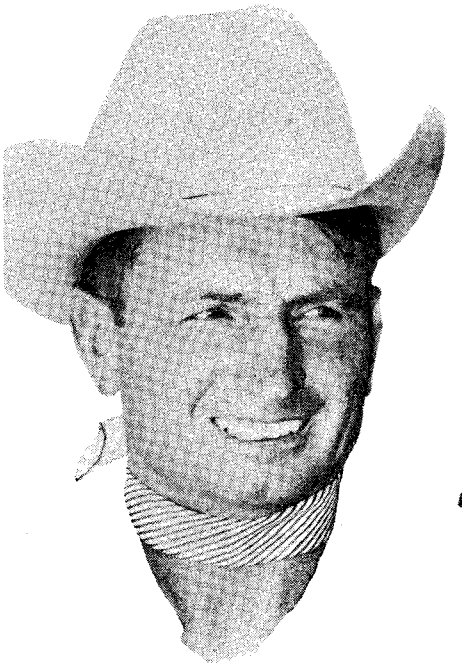

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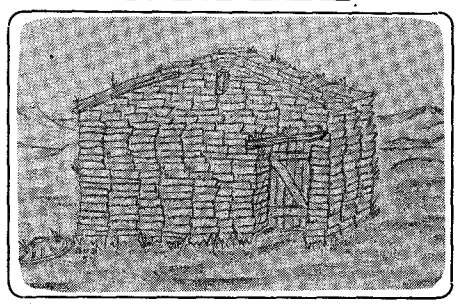
14. At the lynching, Redfield was fearless. He did not react like a guilty man, though Tuttle, obviously guilty, behaved in a craven manner.

15. Tuttle's confession, implicating Redfield, could have been made for the purpose of forcing Redfield to defend himself and thus, also, to use his wealth and position to defend Tuttle.

16. In newspaper reports of the robbery and subsequent events, there is a confusion of names which suggests that other "facts" may have been equally confused. Most stories refer to the lynched man as "Len" Redfield, though his right name was "Lem." Leonard or "Len" Redfield was the son of Lem Redfield's brother, Henry. Yet Henry's son was never accused of any connection with the crime.

17. Final doubt of Redfield's guilt is implied by the guide-book, "Arizona Place Names." This reference states that Lem Redfield was hung for his "alleged" part in the stage robbery and killing.

If nothing else, the enigma of the Redfield Robbers cries out against precipitate pioneer "justice" and damns those who resorted to it.



Typical Sod House. The Chrisman sisters took homesteads and claims of 160 acres each. The girls took turns living with one another to comply with requirements of the U. S. land office. This was their home.

Sod House Frontier

(Continued from page 23)

The door and windows were closed with other blankets or with a buffalo robe. If no prized furniture was brought west, the soddy was then crudely furnished . . . a soap box or nail keg served their purpose as chairs. A table was made from a dry goods box, and a crude bed was fashioned in the corner from the boards of the wagon.

A typical soddy cabin was a rather long single room, with an old kitchen table standing in the middle of the rammed earth floor. Two or three boxes or stools were arranged about the table as seats. At one end of the room stood a wood-burning kitchen range with a wood-box close by, and a hanging shelf of dry goods boxes above, holding tin dishware and rough utensils. At the other end of the room was a kind of combination wardrobe and shelves, built also of waste lumber against the wall, and covered with hanging curtains of some cheap material. Across the room from the door, beyond the table rose a double bunk—one bunk above the other. When some settlers wanted a cleaner house and could afford it, muslin was stretched across the ceiling to keep the dirt from sifting down from the roof into the room below. Even cheesecloth was commonly used for this purpose.

Every ordinary soddy had its grave faults. Its few windows, if any, permitted little light and too little air for ventilation. The immaculate homemaker abominated them because they were so extra hard to keep clean. Straw and dirt kept dropping on everything in the house even if a muslin ceiling was used. But the most disagreeable feature of the soddy was the leaky roof. Few of these sod houses really turned the rain. When it rained heavy, soaking into the dirt roof, it wasn't long before little rivulets of muddy water began running through the sleepers' hair and soaking all beneath the roof. The soddy dweller soon had to learn to migrate when it rained. They moved from the north side of the soddy if the rain was coming from the north. This meant moving everything that you didn't want soaked, including furniture. After a good rain, the saturated dirt roof dripped for days after even when the sky was bright. Pots, pans, and dishes were constantly placed around on the floor and furniture to catch the drippings. One pioneer woman remembered frying her pancakes with one of her children holding an umbrella over her and the stove. It wasn't long before the pioneer woman living in the soddy learned to place her water-catching containers about the room whenever she saw rain clouds in the sky . . . believe it or not she knew every leak hole in her soddy . . . she had to. After a heavy rain, all bed clothing and wearing apparel had to be hung out to dry. That was one of the reasons the pioneer woman loathed to give up her wagon bed . . . it was her only dry place to store her belongings.

WHEN the soddy roof was good and soaked, the weight was immense. The heavy pole rafters sank deeper and deeper into the soggy wet walls until more often than not collapsing the walls and caving in the roof, burying its occupants beneath. To prevent this kind of accident, the pioneers placed heavy posts about the house supporting the sod roof, making a great nuisance because of the large amount of space they took up.

True, there were some striking advantages of the soddy. It was warm in wintertime and cool in the summer. There was no danger of prairie fires destroying it, no fear of the wind blowing it over. Neither was there fear of fire from a faulty fireplace, for it was constructed of sod. The average life of a sod house was from six to eight years.

Except in West Texas where wood was scarce, primitive building types of the various racial elements that invaded Texas were usually of wood, horizontally laid log cabins with hand-split shingle roofs, or jacal vertical plain huts with thatched roofs.

Because of the limited resources of the frontier, pioneers usually confined themselves to the traditional log cabin and the dog-run house that found its way westward from the Atlantic seaboard.

The famous dog-run house consisted of two rooms with an open space between, covered with a continuous, gabled roof. The dog-run or breeze-way, the open hall between the rooms, had many uses. In summer the hall was used as a sitting room, where the washing could be hung on rainy days. Actually, the dogs slept there, rain or shine, just as did the overflow of guests . . . everything not in constant use was always placed in the dog-run. These houses were usually built with batten doors and shutters.

The Texas dugout was also made in the conventional way. A hole was ex-

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cavated about four feet deep. The walls were built up about three feet with sod. A ridge pole was placed across the center, and smaller poles were laid across these. On the poles was placed brush, a layer of sod, and then a layer of earth—thus the creation of a Texas dugout.

Dugouts and sprawling ranch houses tell how the frontier was pushed across the wide plains—pushed across a land of violent extremes and sharp contrasts, a land of surprises and contradictions. It is land that is never to be fully understood but always loved by sons and daughters that have sprung from such a diversity of origins, animated by such a diversity of motives and ideals, that generations must pass before they can fully understand each other. That is the West—*Land of the Sod House Frontier!*

He Wrestled A Cougar!

(Continued from page 17)

MR. WALTERS' cougar-punching hand was still in delicate condition when I talked to him, but even while examining the scars he was talking about the thrills of the hunt and the charms of the chase. For twelve years a registered guide and a former forest ranger, he recalled that thirteen years ago near the Rocky Mountain resort town of Golden, B. C., a huge female grizzly, chocolate brown fur with silver tip, had attacked him.

She was a scant fifty yards away and four times Mr. Walters' bolt-action rifle refused to function. The fifth time the cartridge clicked into the chamber and that was well, for the bear was only six feet away when he drilled her in the neck. As she dropped so did the hunter because his toe caught in a cedar root.

Keeping clear of her thrashing paws was another hazard. The worst menace, however, was not the grizzly. A younger companion, armed with a .22 rifle also tried to shoot the bear. He missed Walters' chest only by inches.

This fellow's aim was better than that of another hunter Walters once guided in the Cariboo Mountains.

Aiming at a deer, the man scored a bull's-eye on the right horn of Walters' pack sack, slung on his back, and the splinters bloodied his neck and chin. He figured he was lucky that time.

In the spring of 1938, while fire-ranging around Quesnel, he came upon a cow moose with a day-old calf. The mother did not like being photographed by Mr. Walters and charged as he clicked the shutter of his vest-pocket camera. He sidestepped, but she belted him with a hind leg in passing, and sent him and his camera flying. When he got up, she tore after him again and he had to slide fifty feet down a cliff atop Warren Mountain to escape.

Next day when he returned to hunt for the camera the moose had left. She had trampled the camera and ripped out the roll, spoiling the best moose picture Mr. Walters ever took.

Treed twice by bull moose and in on the kill of ten grizzlies without mishap, Mr. Walters has led quite a life.

ONLY eight miles from Coal Harbor, a small whaling station also on Quatsino sound, lives another cougar hunter, Dinah Varney. Tall, graceful, and gracious, she and her elderly mother, Mrs. Ethel Varney, a widow, still occupy the 150 acres that the late Thomas Henry Varney took as a crown grant in 1896

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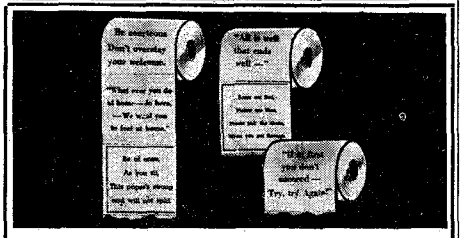

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on his arrival from London, England, where he was a clerk at No. 10 Downing St., the prime minister's residence.

In 1952, Miss Varney shot one cougar and trapped three. "I was letting our cow out from the barn one morning about ten," she said. "A cougar leaped from the bush and the cow ran back to her stall. I picked up a shovel and threw it at the cougar.

"He turned tail and our Tippy, a fox terrier, took after him. While I ran to the house for my .30-30 rifle, the cougar killed poor Tippy. The dog was dangling from the cougar's jaws when I dropped him with one shot."

Ten days later another cougar killed two geese. Miss Varney set out her trap near the trunk of a huge cedar which seems to be a convention center for cougars. She caught three more.

An expert salmon fisherman, Miss Varney handles a power boat as capably as she attends to her flower and vegetable garden. Ten years ago she began trapping and has lost count of the mink, marten, and otter pelts she has taken.

In September of 1950 a cougar raided the sheep house. In the moonlight she saw him lying on the shed roof. Before she could get her gun he had killed all eight sheep. Within a few days he was back—and in her trap under the cedar.

"I've shot three black bears; they gave me no trouble," she said. "Really, I don't like to kill any animal except the cougar. They are mean and miserable, and I must admit that there is a horrible fascination in shooting them."

Death on the North Plains

(Continued from page 9)

killed. Captain Mills, returning from his fruitless hunt down valley for the mythical village in response to Crook's recall by courier, appeared suddenly behind Crazy Horse's braves still fighting Crook on the bluffs. Crazy Horse swung his Winchester over his head in a sweeping signal, and the Indians circled Crook's battered lines and headed back for their camp on Reno Creek twenty miles away.

The shaken Crook was glad to see them leave. He had thirty casualties among his troops and twenty-seven more among his Indian scouts. Next morning he pulled out for his base camp on Goose Creek. Crook had been so badly beaten that he ignored General Sheridan's sharp command to "Hit 'em again and hit 'em hard!" The General's remark upon receiving Sheridan's order clearly reveals his state of shock and bewilderment. "I wonder," said Crook bitterly to an aide, "if Sheridan could surround three Sioux with one soldier."

This veteran officer was so dazed by his defeat and the unprecedented ferocity of the Indians that he insisted he had been opposed by more than three thousand warriors. He believed it so firmly that he refused to take the field anew against the hostiles until he received substantial reinforcements. Sheridan had no more troops to send him, so Crook stayed on at Goose Creek, hunting, fishing, and playing cards with his officers. He was still there on June 25, the tragic day of Custer's annihilation on the Little Big Horn.

GENERAL TERRY, with Colonel Custer and his Seventh Cavalry, and 400 infantry, left Fort Lincoln on May 17. The column followed the route of the Northern Pacific Railroad and reached the mouth of the Powder River on June 9th. Here Terry met the famous river steamer *Far West,* Captain Grant Marsh commanding, loaded with badly needed supplies.

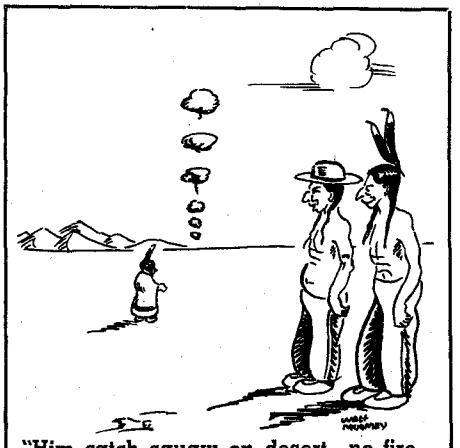
On the 21st of June, Terry moved up to the mouth of the Rosebud, where he was met by scouts from General Gibbon's command. Gibbon had moved down from Fort Ellis with a column of 450 men, and was now encamped on the north side of the Yellowstone, opposite the mouth of the Big Horn. Terry decided to send Custer on a sweeping scout up the Rosebud to follow a broad Indian trail discovered by Major Reno on a similar scout a few days before. Reno had failed to contact the hostiles or even ascertain their numbers, a fact which had exceedingly annoyed both Terry and Custer. Terry gave written instructions to Custer on the morning of June 22nd, following a conference with him and General Gibbon the night before:

"Camp at the Mouth of Rosebud River. June 22, 1876.
Lt. Colonel Custer, 7th Cavalry.
Colonel:

"The Brigadier-General commanding directs that as soon as your regiment can be made ready for the march, you proceed up the Rosebud in pursuit of the Indians whose trail was discovered by Major Reno a few days ago. It is, of course, impossible to give you any definite instructions in regard to this movement, and were it not impossible to do so, the Department Commander places too much confidence in your zeal, energy, and ability to impose upon you precise orders which might hamper your action when nearly in contact with the enemy.

"He will, however, indicate to you his own views of what your action should be, and he desires that you conform to them unless you see *sufficient reason for departing from them.* He thinks that you should proceed up the Rosebud until you ascertain definitely the direction in which the trail above spoken of leads. Should it be found, as it appears almost certain that it will be found, to turn toward the Little Big Horn he thinks that you should proceed southward, perhaps as far as the headwaters of the Tongue, and then turn toward the Little Big Horn, feeling constantly however to your left so as to preclude the possibility of the escape of the Indians to the south or southeast by passing around your left flank.

"The column of General Gibbon is now in motion for the mouth of the Big Horn. As soon as it reaches that point it will cross the Yellowstone and move up at least as far as the forks of the Big and



"Him catch squaw on desert—no fire—no talk back—tellum off."

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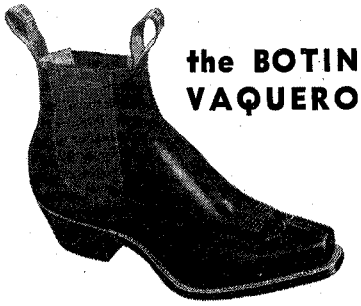

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Little Horn. Of course its future movements must be controlled by circumstances as they may arise; but it is to be hoped that the Indians, if upon the Little Big Horn, may be so nearly enclosed by the two columns that their escape will be impossible.

"The Department Commander desires that on your way up the Rosebud you should thoroughly examine the upper part of Tullocks creek, and that you will endeavor to send a scout through to General Gibbon's column with the information of the result of your examination. The lower part of this creek will be examined by a detachment from General Gibbon's command.

"The supply steamer will be pushed up the Big Horn as far as the forks if the river is found to be navigable for that space, and the Department Commander, who will accompany the column of General Gibbon, desires you to report to him there not later than the time for which your troops are rationed, unless in the meantime you receive further orders."

CUSTER marched at noon on the twenty-second. The regiment struck out to the tune of massed trumpeters, with Generals Terry and Gibbon and Major Brisbin taking the salutes as the gallant Seventh left for its appointment with destiny. Custer remained behind for a short time, talking to Terry. As he swung to the saddle to rejoin his troops, General Terry remarked: "Don't be greedy, Colonel. Leave a few Indians for the rest of us." Unsmiling, Custer raised his hand in salute and rode off after his men.

Twenty miles upriver, Custer's column struck the wide Indian trail previously reported by Major Reno. Scouts fanned out in the lead, the Seventh trailed the hostiles up the Rosebud. On June 24th the trail turned off across the divide toward the Little Horn. The cavalry followed. On the afternoon of this day, scouts informed Custer of the presence of a large village on the Little Horn. "A-plenty Indians for everybody," Scout Mitch Bouyer commented grimly.

At this point, Custer—in following the Indian trail toward the Little Horn—flatly disregarded General Terry's suggestion to "proceed southward, perhaps as far as the headwaters of the Tongue, and then turn toward the Little Big Horn . . ."

Even more surprising, Custer did not adhere to his own strategy—as stated to his officers in a council on the evening of June 24th—of sending the regiment on a night march in order to get as close as possible to the summit of the divide before daybreak. Custer planned to hide his tired troops all day on the twenty-fifth while scouts Mitch Bouyer and Charley Reynolds, together with the Indian scouts, carefully reconnoitered the country ahead. With thorough information as to the size and location of the enemy village, Custer could then mount a crushing surprise attack with rested troops and fresh horses. Military experts agree that this was an excellent plan, and, if strictly adhered to, might well have resulted in complete victory.

Why did Custer discard the plan? Nobody will ever know for certain. For more than eighty years various historians have tried in vain to solve the mystery. The answer undoubtedly lies with Custer himself, with the wounded pride and overmastering ambition of the man. After brilliant but minor successes as a bold leader of cavalry in the Civil War, Cus-

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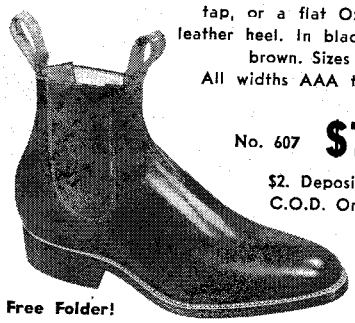

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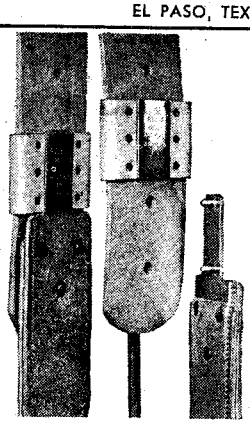

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ter's subsequent military career had been a series of sharp ups and downs. In 1867, as a result of a number of indiscretions, he was court-martialed and convicted. Suspended from rank and command for one year with loss of pay, Custer plumbed the depths of despair. Restored to duty by direct request of General Sheridan, the dashing Colonel won a great reputation for himself and his regiment in the so-called "Battle of the Washita" on November 27, 1868. Yet, even here, occurred a strange and shocking incident which was to haunt and embitter Colonel Custer. True, Black Kettle's Cheyennes had been badly whipped at the Washita, but Captain Benteen, of Troop H, angrily declared that Custer had callously abandoned a portion of his command to the Indians.

THE facts were these. Major Joel Elliott, leading a small detachment, chased a fleeing group of Cheyennes and did not return to the main column before Custer was ready to withdraw. Although he must have known that Elliott was cut off and surrounded, Custer withdrew without going to his assistance. The frozen bodies of Major Elliott and all his men were later found more than two miles from the site of the battle. The corpses were badly mutilated. Custer might have felt that he was justified, in view of the Indians swarming against him, in his abandonment of Elliott and his men, but the tragic affair created much enmity and disgust among his brother officers.

Custer's testimony in the Government investigation of the "Belknap Scandal" in March, 1876, incurred for him the displeasure of President Grant. This sordid affair, involving corruption of frontier Indian traders and implicating the President's brother, Orvil, is much too complicated to discuss in detail here. Custer told the truth as he saw it, and for his reward was placed under military arrest by Presidential order while en route back to his post at Fort Lincoln. Grant, in a fit of spite decidedly unbecoming to the President of the United States, ordered that Custer not be allowed to accompany the expedition against the Indians.

Shaken with emotion, Custer wired President Grant through military channels begging that he reconsider: ". . . As my entire regiment forms a part of the expedition and I am the senior officer of the regiment on duty in this department, I respectfully but most earnestly request that while not allowed to go in command of the expedition I may be permitted to serve with my regiment in the field. I appeal to you as a soldier to spare me the humiliation of seeing my regiment march to meet the enemy and I not share its dangers."

Generals Terry and Sheridan supported and seconded Custer's appeal. Grant changed his mind and ordered that Custer be allowed to accompany the expedition, but only in command of his own regiment. The command of the entire Dakota column, which was to have been Custer's, was now given to General Terry.

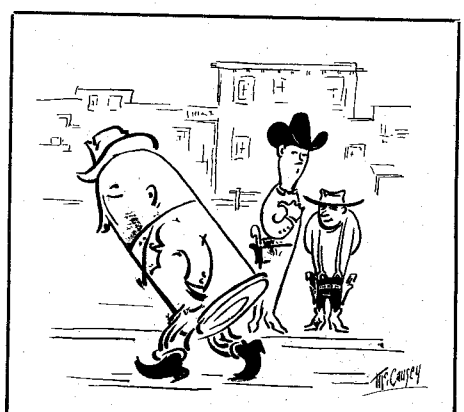
So, in Custer's troubled mind on this 24th day of June, 1876, only one thing could possibly restore his lost prestige—a glorious, smashing victory over the massed might of the Sioux Nation. And that he wanted to perform that feat with his Seventh Cavalry alone is clearly shown by the fact that he had previously declined General Terry's offer of Major Brisbin's battalion of the Second Cavalry, along with a platoon of Gatling guns. Admittedly, the Gatling guns were not adapted for rapid transport through rough country, and there is plenty of argument among historians as to just how serious was Terry's suggestion of reinforcement. In any event, Custer's reasons for declining help were sharply pinpointed by a statement made by Lieutenant J. H. Bradley, of General Terry's command. Writing in his journal on June 21st, Bradley penned these revealing words: ". . . it is understood that if Custer arrives first he is at liberty to attack at once if he deems prudent. We have little hope of being in on the death, as Custer will undoubtedly exert himself to the utmost to get there first and win all the laurels for himself and his regiment."

And that, judging from his movements just prior to the battle, was exactly what Custer tried to do. On the morning of June 25th the Seventh Cavalry moved to the attack: 585 enlisted men, 31 officers, a group of Arikara (Ree) scouts, six Crow scouts, the white scouts Bouyer and Reynolds, the civilian scout George Herendeen, a Negro interpreter, Isaiah Dorman, a white interpreter named Girard, half a dozen civilian packers, Custer's younger brother Boston, his nephew Arthur Reed (known as "Autie"), and Mark Kellogg, a newspaperman.

The mood of the veteran scouts was somber. The day before they had seen Sioux signs on the campsite where the Indians had held their great Sun Dance of two weeks before. The signs—three stones laid in a row, and sand drawings of dead men with their heads toward the Sioux—indicated that the Lakotas believed their medicine was all-powerful and that the white men would all be killed. Another sign interpreted by the Indian scouts consisted of a pile of stones with the skull of a buffalo bull on one side and that of a buffalo cow on the other, with a slanting pole pointing toward the cow skull. The Rees declared that this meant that the Sioux would fight like a buffalo bull when overtaken and that the soldiers would run from them like women.

At just about noon the regiment crossed the divide and rode down into the fateful valley of the Little Big Horn.

THE CUSTER BATTLE has been written up more than any other episode of the Indian wars of the West. More than a score of books and countless magazine articles have been written on the subject in the eighty-odd years since the battle. The actual last message to the outside world from an immediate eyewitness (white) to the Custer debacle



"They say he's really loaded."

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was found on the body of Mark Kellogg, reporter for the Bismarck, North Dakota, *Tribune:* "We leave the Rosebud (River) tomorrow, and by the time this reaches you, we will have met and fought the red devils, and with what results remains to be seen. I go with Custer and will be at the death."

A number of Indians who fought against Custer that terrible day on the Little Big Horn have related their accounts of the "big fight on the Greasy Grass" and allowed these accounts to be printed. There has always been a strong tendency on the part of white students of the battle to discredit any and all Indian reports of the tragic affair on the grounds that Indians are by nature unreliable. They point out in support of their assertion, that the Indian accounts vary widely. Edgar I. Stewart writes in the prefix to his fine and profusely documented book *Custer's Luck* . . . "Many persons who have written on this subject have refused to use the accounts given by the Indians on the grounds that they are so fragmentary, inconclusive, and contradictory as to be almost worthless. But in common fairness it should be noted that they are no more so than the accounts of some of the white survivors which often disagree on even the most elementary details . . . "

George Bird Grinnell, Thomas B. Marquis, and Stanley Vestal—three eminent historians of the American Indian—all used Indian eye-witness accounts of the battle in their writings and accorded them the credibility they deserved. These writers, keen students all of Indian characteristics, present the testimony of these warriors with due reservations, taking into full account the obvious impossibility of an eye-witness to remain cool and observant in the fury of a battle where he was trying to kill the enemy while simultaneously trying to avoid *being* killed by him. An added deterrent to factual Indian reporting of the battle was the very real fear of punishment held by participants in the fight. That was why many of the Indian narrators refused to allow their names to be mentioned if their reminiscenses were to published.

In this chapter on the Sioux, we will use an Indian eye-witness account of the battle even though the teller must remain anonymous. That was the condition imposed when, nearly twenty years ago, he told his story to me through his grandson. The grandson admitted frankly that the old man was still afraid that the Government would punish him for killing soldiers back there in 1876. When the old warrior passed on to the Shadow Land shortly after telling his story, I tried to get his real name from the grandson but to no avail. "Nobody will be benefitted by revealing Grandfather's right name at this late date," wrote Charles Wilson from New York, where he was employed as a construction worker. "If you should ever want to use the story, go ahead. But use the name I gave you—Charging Bear."

The story follows—a story told haltingly over many pipes and cups of sweetened coffee—a story carefully and patiently translated over a period of many days in the telling:

IT was a happy time and free—the last such good time our people were to know. Warriors from each of the Seven Council Fires of the Sioux were gathered there in the great camp along the Greasy Grass, the stream that white men call the Little Big Horn: Oglalas, Hunkpapas, Without Bows (Sans Arcs), Minni-

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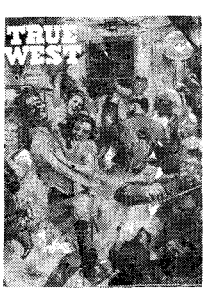

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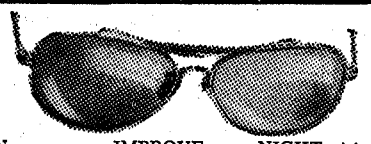

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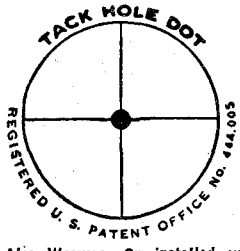

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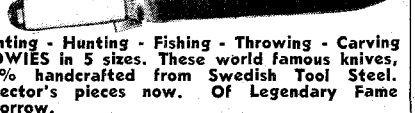

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conjous, Santees, Two Kettles, and Blackfoot Sioux. Some Cheyennes were with us, too. Amongst all the villages we had more than two thousand braves; our lodge-circles stretched for three miles or more along the river. Our hunters had found no game in the valley, but the drying racks of the women still held plenty of meat from the last buffalo hunt.

"The people rested during the day and danced and feasted in the cool nights, waiting for the soldiers to come. We knew they were coming soon. Sitting Bull had dreamed of soldiers without ears falling into camp head down from the sky, and this was a true vision for all men knew that soldiers had no ears for listening to truth. And they would come upon us as swiftly as arrows falling from the sky, for they were angry and would charge us fiercely. Only the week before we had whipped General Crook, the soldier-chief we knew as Three Stars, in a big fight on the Rosebud. The Great Father at Washington was angry with us too, and would send his young men riding hard to punish us for whipping Three Stars. But we were not afraid of the soldiers, for Sitting Bull's vision had foretold that many would die.

"The sun was straight overhead (noon) on the eighth day after the Rosebud fight, near the end of the Moon of Making Fat, when the soldiers came. We, in the Oglala camp, saw the great cloud of dust kicked up by their horses' feet upriver from us. Next we saw the soldiers, a long line of them with Ree scouts riding at the upper end of the line. We heard the criers in the Hunkpapa camp —which was nearest the soldiers—shouting: 'The soldiers are coming to kill us! Warriors, get ready to fight!' Then the soldiers charged, and we heard the loud noise of many guns fired together and the smacking of bullets against the lodgepoles of the *tipis*.

"In the Hunkpapa camp, Sitting Bull's warriors grabbed their bows and guns and held back the soldiers until the old men and the women and children got away to the flats beyond the camp and hid in the tall grass there. Soon warriors from all the other villages came galloping up to help the Hunkpapas. Sitting Bull, Black Moon, and Gall led a charge straight at the soldiers, and the *Wasichus* (white men) stopped and huddled together. The soldiers got off their horses to fight on foot.

"*Hoh,* what a bad mistake *that* was! Our hearts sang when we saw the soldiers do this foolish thing, for then we knew that our helpless ones were safe from pursuit, and we could fight hard without fearing for them.

"And now came Crazy Horse on his yellow pinto; the hailstone markings on his body, the lightning streak on his face, and the red-backed hawk that was his medicine on his head. '*Hoppo!*' he called as he came up. 'Let us go!'

"So, following our Strange Man, we drove the soldiers away from the Hunkpapa camp and back into the woods along a cutbank where once, long before, the river had flowed. Here they rallied and made a stand.

NOW the fighting became all mixed up, with warriors charging the soldiers in twos and threes to count *coups* and take scalps and guns. I wanted one of those guns, so I rode my pony right up to a big soldier with red hair all over his face and shot him with an arrow. He fell to the ground with the arrow sticking in his throat. His carbine went off when it hit the ground and the bullet creased my pony's neck so that he reared and screamed with pain. I was scared then—my belly got cold and sick with fear. I forgot all about getting the soldier's gun and started to run away. A warrior grabbed my pony's head and called to me: 'Don't be afraid, boy! Only the earth lives forever. Today is as good a day as any to die. Be brave—take the white man's scalp and gun and help your brothers fight!'

"I took heart at these strong words. I scalped the big white man I had killed and took his gun and killed another soldier with it. I was afraid no more until the battle was over.

"Suddenly the soldiers jumped back on their horses and ran away to the river, trying to reach the hills beyond. The little soldier-chief—the one called Reno—galloped ahead of all the others, spurring his horse like a crazy man to get away. We rode right into the water after them, knocking them off their horses with war clubs as they tried to get out the other side of the river. *Hoh,* it was good sport—better than hunting buffaloes! Only a few of the whites fought back—the others dropped their empty guns without trying to reload and bent yelling over their horses' necks to dodge our blows. Yet, as fiercely as we attacked them, many of the soldiers got away. With their little soldier-chief still in the lead they headed for the hills on the east side of the river.

"Now a messenger came racing his lathered horse and crying out: 'Brothers, come! More soldiers are coming to kill our helpless ones! Come quickly!'

"We could see them—a double line of soldiers this time, riding along the ridge on the other side of the river opposite the lower camps. The bone war whistles shrilled as Crazy Horse and Gall and Knife Chief called the warriors together. 'Remember the helpless ones! This is a good day to die!' cried Crazy Horse. And we Oglalas cried back, 'It is a good day to die! *Hoka hey!*'

"Swiftly we rode downriver to defend our women and children, but we could see that we were too far away to stop these new enemies before they reached the river. Then, as we raced our ponies toward them, we saw a fine brave thing.

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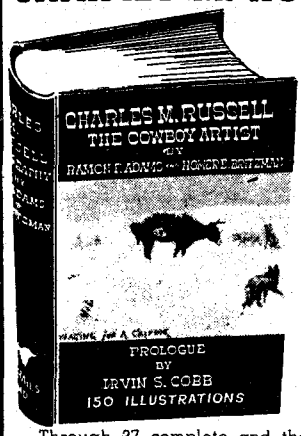

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"A bunch of soldiers all riding gray horses fought hard from a hill back from the river. Others were on horseback all along the ridge and down the slope to the river. Some had lost their horses or had them killed beneath them, and these fought just as hard on foot. We charged them, cutting them down in hand-to-hand fighting as they moved up the slope toward the soldiers on the gray horses ringed around Long Hair. The noise of the guns popping was like great bundles of sticks being broken together. Wounded horses flopped around on the ground, screaming and blowing bloody froth from their lungs. One soldier, with three yellow marks on his sleeve (Sergeant Butler) ran up on a little hill and fought us all alone until he died full of bullets. He was a brave warrior—that soldier of Long Hair's!

"Crazy Horse came riding like the wind on a fresh war horse and shouting: 'Oglalas! Follow me! It is time to end this fight!'

"So we were off, through the choking dust and stinking powder smoke, across the river and around the end of the ridge where the soldiers fought. Up a ravine and over the top of a hill, Crazy Horse led us—and down upon the soldiers below. *Hoh,* but they were brave—those trapped white men! When their long guns jammed from too much shooting, they fired their many-shots short guns, and when these too were empty, they used them as clubs. For just a little while they fought strongly—and then there were no more of them left to kill. Long Hair and his young men were all dead—their pale, bloody faces staring up at the sky . . .

"So it ended—the big fight an old warrior can never forget. There is more to be told, but I cannot tell it. My heart falls to the ground when I think of the bad times that followed. I, Charging Bear, can speak no more . . ."

(To Be Concluded In Next Issue)

They're Still Rustling Cattle!

(Continued from page 15)

by finding that both men were in the right. His practiced eyes saw at a glance that some rustler had tried his luck at changing a brand. With a hot iron, he had converted an SS brand into an 88 with a bar under it.

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the brands were changed. Later the rustlers sold the cattle in San Antonio; then that buyer resold them at the auction. The buyer this time was the second neighbor; he had hauled the cattle home and put them in his pasture across the fence from where they were stolen.

In finding out all these things, Stoner also caught the rustlers.

However, all rustlers, even those who leave the plainest sort of tracks are not caught. One recent spring on the 300,000 acre JA ranch in the Texas Panhandle, an old cow with a milking-time look was bellowing around, and it was evident she had lost her calf. There on the range were the tracks of a pickup truck. They zigzagged, twisted, turned, leaving in their wake a swath of flattened and peeled brush. Finally, there were the tracks of a calf where, in being dragged, it had plowed its four little feet into the ground. Since there were no human tracks, the detective visualized this one as a really modern method. It was clear that one man had driven the truck, dodging after the calf like a roping horse, and another man had stood in the back of the truck twirling his lasso and dropping the loop expertly over the calf's neck. The detectives decided they would like to see these men perform.

The well-filled files of the old force of range detectives show that cattle rustling has been a popular crime through the years—mainly a game of courage and wits between the rascals and the detectives. But never before had there been anything quite so ruthless or wasteful as the half-a-beef rustling and the killing of cows so their calves can be stolen.

If the range detectives live up to their long tradition, they'll solve this one too.

Truly Western

(Continued from page 29)

the bronc riding championship at Madison Square Garden, New York City, in 1923.

"In 1924 he joined Tex Austen's show, going abroad where they performed in London for the king and queen, in Paris, and other cities.

Champion Dave Whyte in action.

"Returning home, he became interested in motion pictures and played important roles in many Western films such as *The Plainsman, Custer's Last Stand, The Arizonian, When A Man's A Man,* etc. A number of years ago, while working for Will Rogers, Jr., White sustained a broken hip from which he never recovered.

"Surviving are two brothers: James M. White, Vienna, Va.; Charles White, Sheridan, Wyoming; a sister, Mrs. Bill Potts, Buffalo, Wyoming; and a number of nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. C. J. White, early day residents of Wyoming, and three sisters."

More On the Tom Mix Discussion

Editor, Truly Western:

What's all this hassle on Tom Mix? I never knew Tom worked as a bartender in Oklahoma City, but I knew he was Sheriff of Washington County, Oklahoma, as well as Montgomery County, Kansas. He was for several years a Deputy U. S. Marshal and law enforcement officer.

Tom Mix was a Spanish-American War Veteran, and distinguished himself sufficiently to receive a medal and a citation. He also took part in the Boxer trouble in China, and served with the British in the Boer War in Africa.

As to his riding and roping ability: In 1909, Tom Mix won the National Riding and Roping Contest, Prescott, Arizona. Two years later he won the same honor in Canon City, Colorado.

Tom Mix possessed a forceful silent picture personality. His pictures sold so well Fox Studio at one time paid him $20,000 weekly. With the advent of talking movies, Tom began to slip.

In his last years, prior to his untimely death in an auto accident, Tom was in circus work. In 1932 I was attending the University of Oregon when Tom Mix brought his circus to town. I skipped classes to attend an afternoon performance. I saw Tom Mix ride, rope, and shoot. Even then, when he was past 50, he excelled at all three.—Hagan Moore, 324 South 5th Street, Klamath Falls, Oregon.

Reader Blasts Writer

Dear Mr. Gipson:

In a back issue of *True West* (March-April, 1957) I noticed a story by one Marc Peterson titled "The Death of *Joe* Loving." Anyone even half way familiar with the history of West Texas and trail driving should know that *Oliver* Loving was the man the story concerns. Oliver's son, Joe Loving, was I believe the first secretary of the old Northwest Texas Cattle Raisers' Association, precursor of the present Texas & Southwestern Cattle Raisers' Association, Inc., a post he held consecutively for many years.

Oliver Loving was a Kentuckian by birth, and he became one of the foremost cattlemen of the fifties and sixties on the Northwest Texas (Palo Pinto and Jack Counties) frontier. In the *Trail Drivers of Texas,* Charles Goodnight credits Oliver Loving with having been the first man to trail cattle out of Texas. History does not bear out this statement, but he undoubtedly was one of the very first, if not the first, to move a herd *northward* to market. As Goodnight stated, Oliver Loving drove a herd to Illinois in 1858, fully eight years before the start of the general northward movement. The following year he struck northwestward with a herd to be disposed of in the mining camps of Colorado. Loving County, Texas, was named for him, as was Loving's Bend on the Pecos, where he received his death wound in 1867.

Federal Judge James C. Wilson was a grandson of Oliver Loving, as was my long-time friend Horace Wilson, now dead for many years. Their mother was

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a daughter of Oliver Loving, and their father was a sheriff of Palo Pinto County who was waylaid and killed in the late seventies.—Howard Hampton, 3320 23rd Street, Lubbock, Texas.

Writer Replies

Dear Norm:

Thanks for your note. I'm sorry if I caused you any embarrassment about Joe Loving. The "old-timers" who have been pestering you about Joe Loving didn't know Joe very well. Please let me quote from Pages 6 and 7 of my seminar paper entitled "The Goodnight-Loving Trail," 1866—1886: "The following spring, 1866, Goodnight determined to find a northern market . . . The next problem was to find someone to go with him. He asked several men before he ran into Oliver Loving, or *Joe* Loving, as he was called . . . Goodnight's problem was solved when he came across Joe Loving. According to Goodnight: 'Loving was probably the most experienced cowman in Texas at that time. Also, he was probably the first man who ever trailed cattle out of Texas' . . ."—Marc Peterson, 2399 Prospect, Apt. 2, Berkeley 4, California.

Well, folks, here we go again! Reader rips into writer, and writer—being human too, believe it or not—rips right back. Here we have two people on the prod and neither will convince the other of the error of his ways. Seems like a good spot to discuss and explore this accuracy business once more and try to get the whole matter squared away again. I don't know of a better man to do it than the publisher himself. Here's ol' Joe, replying to another TW critic. Letter and answer follow:

Dear Joe:

I enjoy your magazine, but frankly I think the word TRUE in the title ought to shrink about six points every issue until it reaches the vanishing point. I think you've found out that authentic, verified history is hard to get and leans toward dullness, the way most historians write. So you've done the things you used to rave about—you fictionize and you don't fuss so much about accuracy. You're writing the West as it may have been; not as it was. But you still call it fact.

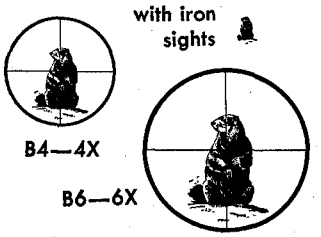
This is just an honest, man-to-man talk. If I didn't think your magazine was worth reading, I wouldn't waste money on it. But I think it is mis-labeled. When we write fiction, we call it fiction. Touché?—Bill Williams, General Delivery, Taos, New Mexico.

Howdy, Bill!

By golly, that's the way I like it—man-to-man talk.

You have brought up a subject that I wish we could do something about. Fact of the matter is, I wish *you* could suggest something. Yours is the kind of letter that *True Magazine* and every other institution the world over that at least makes a try for the truth gets—but they seldom get any suggestions that are workable. Yours, however, is about 1 in 1,000. The other 999 letters say at least we're trying our best to elevate popular literature on the West—which sunk to a low level in the pulp magazine and in some of the Western movies which showed the West in a light that was absolutely fantastic!

We told our readers from the very beginning that we were not a wealthy organization and that, being human, we



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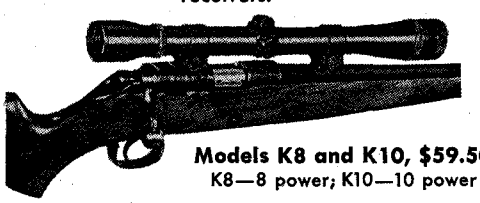

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would make many mistakes. Also, since it was physically impossible for us to have been at each spot on which all significant stories happened during the history of the West, we couldn't personally check on the absolute fact of all stories. We couldn't even afford a first-class research editor in the beginning, and we really got a shower of letters—most of them eagerly trying to help us out because we had started a good cause. Now these critical letters have trickled down to a *very* few and they tell us that while every single statement in *True West* may not be true, we have achieved by far the closest thing to it ever attempted in a popular magazine.

You letter amuses me in that you say that we fictionize and don't fuss so much about accuracy. Actually, I would like for you to be the research editor on one issue of *True West*—trying your very damndest to see that every single little fact is right—and then wait to see how many errors *you* had made! We know it is impossible to put out six issues of a magazine like *True West* each year and not have a certain amount of errors—but don't fool yourself about our not striving for accuracy. Gradually, as we can afford it, we are going to have the best research men in the West look over each story with a magnifying glass—and even *then* mistakes will occasionally crop up.

Our belief is that the absolute truth can be told in an interesting and fast-moving manner, and we are constantly trying to get just as close to the truth as we possibly can.

A great Eastern editor once raised the question: "What IS the truth?" The old story about the five people who witnessed an automobile accident is a good example. If you interview these five people five days later you are going to get five different stories. The people in the accident will probably add to the confusion and the Highway Patrol may even have a different story than all concerned. How would you like to have the assignment, then to go in and write the *truth* of that accident? You would have about 10 people tearing you apart, calling you names and saying that you wrote fiction and called it truth!

We are just making an *honest* attempt to do the very best we can under limited financial circumstances, to present the nearest thing we can possibly get to that word "truth" on what happened in the Old West. It is a hell of a lot closer than "They Ate Me Alive!" and that sort of stuff being published by most of the men's magazines, and the rancid fiction of the pulps. I *know*. Hell, I used to write that stuff for a living when I was a kid!

What does a name mean? We use *True West* because it is the nearest thing to what we are trying to present than any other title we can think of. Also, we think it is more practical than such a title as "WE ARE STRIVING TO MAKE IT AS ACCURATE AS POSSIBLE WEST." Or, would that title really *be* better?

You mentioned authentic, verified history as being hard to get and leaning toward dullness, the way most historians write. That is true—and also, historians differ bitterly over fine points that happened in even important history. The story goes that some charts have been uncovered that even would change the accuracy of some aspects of the Bible.

Of course, we are not perfect—but we are on the slow, hard trail up to being as *close* to that unattainable goal as we possibly can get. You have cast the old Biblical stone—so I invite you in return to write the *true* story of any controversial subject of the Old West that you wish and, if it isn't too old, I'll bet you have half a dozen letters from old-timers who were there, who saw it, or whose pappy saw it, and they'll look you straight in the eye and tell you you're a lying so-and-so!

That's the way it goes. So we just do our damndest and whenever mistakes are made, we air the subject through the letters department. Generally, we wind up by getting about as accurate a story on the subject as a whole as is available today. And many times we get facts that are not available in any library.

Glad to hear from you again and to have this chance to talk with you man-to-man. I believe this is your second letter of criticism, so I have taken time out to answer it fairly since the subject seems to be bothering you. Frankly, our criticism these days is durned nigh limited to fiction writers like yourself. We have some of the greatest historians of this nation on our subscription list (I'll name them if you wish) and *they* say we are doing an increasingly good job on the Old West. They tell me that this is the type thing school children, grown-ups, cowboys, the whole blamed crowd will read, and they are with us all the way—a few mistakes here and there notwithstanding.

How about printing your letter? (Permission was granted). We have made it a policy to print every single letter of a critical nature (at least, those that have any foundation at all) and we haven't had enough to print lately.—Joe A. Small.

Any further questions, Bill?

Found—a Lost Mine!

Gentlemen:

Well, I see in your October "Coming Up" column that Dr. E. R. Harrington claims no one finds lost mines any more. I'm afraid the Doc will have to take that back.

In July, 1957, an article appeared in the Los Angeles *Times* stating that a silver mine had been found near Hollister, California. A man looking for gypsum deposits on private land came across the old mine. Even the mine dumps had lots of paying ore in it. Unfortunately, I can't give you the exact date the story appeared in the L. A. *Times*.

More information on Hollister: It is located about 30 miles east of Monterey Bay, which in turn is located about 75 miles south of California. The mine in question was operated by the Spanish missionaries for many years prior to 1840, at which time it was closed down due to the coming of the Americans into the area. The Spaniards hid the mine and moved out ahead of the approaching Yanks.

This is all the information I have on the mine at this time.

I also am looking for a lost mine—the Lost Los Padres Mine. This is supposed to be located in the southwestern end of the San Joaquin Valley. It's lots of fun, and I'm curious like the bear that went over the mountain to see what he could see.

If I get any more info on this mine I will send it on to you.—Don R. Bupp, 410 Lierly Street, Taft, California.

The Lady Approves

Dear Editor:

Here are my Christmas gift subscriptions as a tangible answer to your call for help in making *True West* the monthly magazine it so richly deserves to be. Can't let *True West* down, that's for sure! Anyway, I agree with you that I can't do better for certain names on my Christmas gift list.

Did you know that *True West* is here to stay? It is here to stay because it gives readers the opportunity to read authentic Western stories by folks who have either taken an actual part in the experiences of which they write or have received their information through other qualified persons.

To be sure, you will always have some controversy among your readers (human nature being what it is) but it will only add more reading interest. Too, there will always be a chance that some new detail may be brought out in this manner or some long-accepted fact debunked.

I have greatly enjoyed *True West's* variety of style of writing; narrative, actual experience, "as told to," and the purely classic type such as Walt Coburn's beautifully written "The Honor of Old Thunder" (November, '54).

Also, I have enjoyed the homelike touch you have put into *True West*. It makes us feel like one big family, each with a personal interest and ownership in a magazine edited SPECIALLY for us.

Yes, *True West IS* different. Let's keep it that way.—Jean M. Moore, 1127 Hollins Avenue, Helena, Montana.

And to that sentiment, bless your heart, Jean—we love you to pieces!

Letters on Wyatt Earp

Dear Editor:

I would like to ask some questions on Wyatt Earp.

In the article "Wyatt Earp's Grave Robbed!" in October *True West*, the statement was made: "Earp died in 1929 in Los Angeles, and his wife, Josephine, had his *ashes* brought here and interred in a plot at the Hills of Eternity. She died in 1944 and her *ashes* were put in the same plot."

I cannot understand how *ashes* were allowed to be inurned in a plot of a Jewish cemetery, because it is against the Jew's religion to burn human corpses and even to inurn them among Jews.

Was Wyatt Earp a Jew or not—or must it remain a secret?

Do any children survive Wyatt Earp?

Did Earp make use only of a Buntline Special (Colt) Revolver, or did he use other makes? (I know that occasionally he used a sawed-off shotgun.)

What kind of revolver holster did Earp use for his Buntline Special?

Are Wyatt Earp's revolvers located? What make are they and where are they now?

Not including the three murderers of

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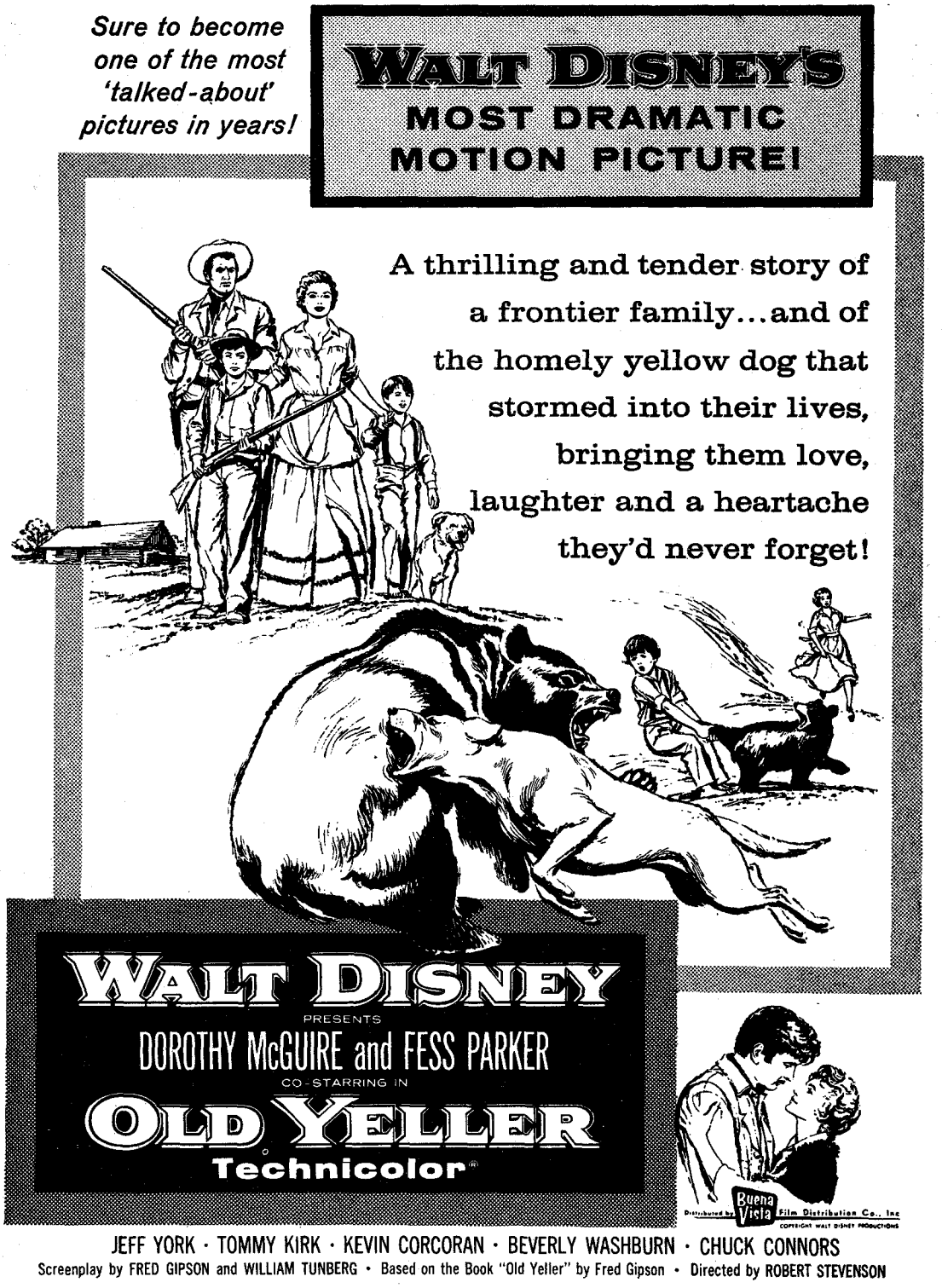

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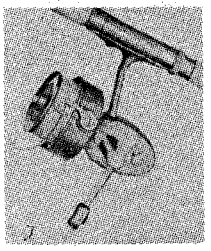

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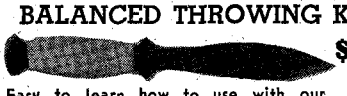

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E. ROLLBAND 2300 Merrick Rd., Merrick, N.Y.

his brothers, how many outlaws were killed by Earp?

Is it true that there is no official record of Wyatt Earp as a sheriff or U. S. Marshal?

Did Wyatt Earp wear an official Sheriff's badge?

Also, I would like to know this: In the "County Seat War" (October, 1957, *True West*) appears a photo of a group of Dodge City gunfighters. At what age did each of the group die (excluding Wyatt Earp)? Which of them died a natural death? I hope the readers of *True West* will be able to answer these general questions for me, as well as this one of a more personal nature: One of my brothers-in-law, living in Belgium, is a Marcus. I would deeply appreciate any information from America to know if he is a relative of Wyatt Earp's deceased wife. I thank my fellow TW readers in advance for any information they may kindly give me.—S. Silberschatz, 250, Rue Josaphat 250, Bruxelles 3, Belgium.

Okay, all you Wyatt Earp aficionados, have at it!

Howdy, Amigo Joe:

Feeling that *True West* aims to be true in all respects, I feel duty bound to call attention to any error discovered in same. This is not to discredit the author, but to keep the record straight. I refer to the statement made by A. M. King, former deputy of Earp, on page 17 of the October issue in Lea McCarty's article, "Wyatt Earp's Burial Secret." Quote:

"Hell, no. He never wore a gun when I knew him. He used to lay it up in the seat of that old Franklin car of his and he'd go get it if he wanted to lay it across the head of some galoot who was looking for trouble. That was his long-barreled Buntline that the dime novelist Ned Buntline gave Wyatt and Bat Masterson and Luke Short, you know. He carried that thing in the back of his car all the time I worked with him, through 1910 to about 1912 . . ." End quote.

With the stampede to the gold fields of Alaska in 1897, Wyatt Earp left San Francisco and went to Nome. There he established his Dexter Gambling Hall. In 1901 he returned briefly to California, then went to the boom mining town of Tonopah, Nevada. About 1906, Wyatt married Josephine Sarah Marcus, daughter of a pioneer Hebrew merchant of San Francisco. On January 18, 1929, a short time before reaching his 81st year, he passed away, and his body was then cremated and his ashes buried in the Jewish cemetery at Hills of Eternity, in the Marcus plot in San Francisco. In 1944 Mrs. Earp passed away, and her ashes were buried beside that of her husband.

Regarding Wyatt Earp's Buntline Special: When Wyatt took his *pasear* to Nome, Alaska, he packed his famous gun along with him. In Alaska, he loaned the gun to a friend who carried the U. S. Mail, using a small whaleboat. On one of the mail carrier's trips, the water became so rough he was compelled to throw overboard part of his cargo, and Wyatt Earp's Buntline gun went into the water and was lost.

The above is according to the item published in *The American Rifleman,* Volume 103, Number 1, of April, 1955, written by John S. du Mont, an authority on these long-barreled Colt revolvers.

This being the fact, how could Wyatt Earp have possibly packed this gun in 1910, as stated in Mr. McCarty's story? —E. M. Dickey (Nevada Dick), Route 1, Box 164, Oklawaha, Florida.

Will check on this Dick. You reckon Mr. King's memory slipped overboard as well as the gun? We'll have his reply in the next issue.

GHOST HORSES

The wind is a herd of ghost horses,
Stampeding across the plains.
The wind is a herd of ghost horses,
Free from all saddles and reins.
The wind is a herd of ghost horses,
No cowboy can ever tame.
So always across the plains they run,
Raising the dust 'til it covers the sun.
No one can see them, but they are there,
Because you can hear their hoofs slash the air.
Whirling and raring as madly they go,
To a range that no one can ever know.
—Doug Dixon, Route 3, Seymour, Texas.

TW A Hit With The Apaches

Dear Joe:

Say, I heard something new in Chama today. The Jicarillo Apaches in Dulce, New Mexico, buy every *True West* that hits the newsstands. They LOVE IT! They say it's the only thing they can find to read where the Indian sometimes comes out ahead and wools the cavalry once in a while. The Apache kids even draw pictures from copies of TW, and some of the older boys do a whale of a job on artistic drawings from TW ideas.

When you can get a man so interested in reading that he'll spend his last two-bits on a magazine and pass up a cold bottle of beer, MAN, that's SALESMANSHIP!

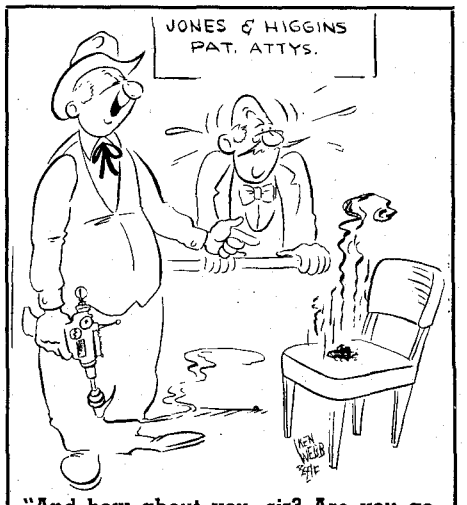
Keep on coming with those Indian stories. The whole bunch loves them—Bill Faris, El Vado Ranch, Box 25, Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico.

Sack 'em, Cowboy!

A famous matador was fighting in the bull ring in a Mexican border town. Among the spectators was an old cowhand who was seeing his first bull fight.

The fight had reached the stage where the matador, armed only with a cape, was taunting the bull, avoiding the animal's horns by fractions of an inch and flipping the cape aside as the bull charged past.

At last the old cowhand could stand it no longer. He arose and shouted: "Buddy, he ain't never gonna run into that sack unless you hold it still!"



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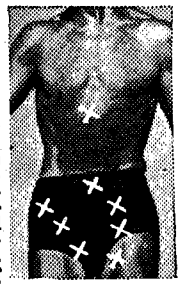

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Steamboat—King of the Buckers!

(Continued from page 21)

hooves slammed against the ground. He rode Steamboat to a run. But Jack Maring paid for it. He couldn't eat a meal for two weeks.

FROM 1908 to 1914, Steamboat piled up the best of riders. In 1913, Col. C. B. Irwin's Rodeo show bought him and Steamboat became the most widely-traveled horse in the world.

A lady who saw him in 1910 says: "I'll never forget Steamboat. Every movement he made had a kick behind it. And he put everything he had into everything he did.

"To look at him, you'd think he was a rich man's riding horse. But when he started to buck. Oh my! I ache all over just to remember it!"

Interest in him still percolates today. The University of Wyoming, at Laramie, wants to raise money for a statue of him with Guy Holt up. It is felt that Steamboat is the perfect example of good sportsmanship and hard-hitting, unquenchable courage.

When not in the arena, Steamboat fooled many would-be conquerors. He grazed peacefully, didn't shy at people and never showed high-strung, skitterish ways.

One such rider, Pecos Carver, misjudged Steamboat's power. He wore a pair of fancy-beaded moccasins for his ride. In fact, his whole outfit looked like that of a "Las Vegas Cowboy."

Pecos never had a prayer. In ten to a dozen jumps, Steamboat dynamited out to the far fence, sunfishing all of the way. He halted, made a complete swap, and jounced to one side. The switch nearly broke Pecos in two. His moccasins flew off, leaving him in socks. In a matter of seconds Pecos sailed wide and slammed into the dirt, thrown by a vicious pitch and bounce.

Thereafter, when wearing moccasins, Pecos stayed on the fence.

Steamboat's last contest took place in Salt Lake City in 1914. Placed in a corral overnight, he tore himself up on the rough hewn fence poles during a very severe thunder and lightning storm.

When the show returned to Cheyenne, he was sick. The "vets" who examined him said he had blood poisoning and couldn't be cured.

So, after 13 years of battle, Steamboat lost his last. When the word got out that the old warrior was to be shot, all of his former riders gathered to visit him. And to make sure, a vicious murderer was brought from the state penitentiary to fire the shot. Tom Horn didn't miss.

In Cheyenne, where he began his bronc days, Steamboat lies buried back of the grandstand in Frontier Park.

Steamboat, in his prime, had no peer in his art of cracking off riders. He dumped off every one of the best riders of his day. And he did it without tricks. Nor did he have to be spurred and fanned to make him buck.

The rider who didn't screw himself down in the saddle at the very start never had another chance. With the speed of light, Steamboat launched himself into the air and came down on rigid legs in disc-crunching jolts.

Even today, no bronc can touch him. Steamboat is still "King of the Buckers!"

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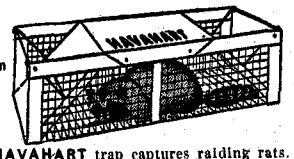

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WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

WILD WEST SHOWMAN

Spirit Gun of the West (Clark, $8.50) by Raymond W. Thorpe is the glamorous biography of Doc W. F. Carver, plainsman, trapper, buffalo hunter, medicine chief of the Santee Sioux, world's champion marksman, and originator of the American wild west show.

Buffalo Bill fans will be shocked to learn that Doc Carver, blindfolded, was a better man with a gun than Bill was even when cold sober.

Carver started the first wild west show and took on Cody as a partner. Bill's faking and boozing caused a split in the partnership with each man organizing his own wild west show. Bitter rivalry continued with their shows often competing in the same town at the same time. The competition ended with Carver winning and Bill eating crow.

Doc Carver was a handsome giant who excelled in the manly sports of the frontier. However, he became most famous as the world's champion marksman—he was never beaten in numerous contests by the best shots in the universe. While only a boy, he had learned to become a dead shot while hunting game for the hungry Santee Sioux and these simple appreciative people dubbed his fatal fire stick the "spirit gun."

Thorpe, friend of Doc's late years, has written a pleasant credible book about a famous frontiersman whose wild west show thrilled audiences in America, England, Germany, Russia, and Australia. Finely printed, as are all Clark books.

INDIAN MESSIAH

Paul Bailey's *Wovoka, The Indian Messiah* (Westernlore, $5.50) is a well-done book about the little known Paiute who was indirectly responsible for the killing of Sitting Bull and the massacre of Wounded Knee. Wovoka, the son of a Piaute prophet, learned about the white man's God in the home of the pioneer Wilson family and while picking hops in Washington State learned much about the "shakers," the religious fanatics led by Squ-sacht-un and Ai-yal. Back home in Mason Valley, Nevada, Wovoka observed the growing popularity of Mormonism among the Paiutes and resolved to become their leader and prophet both to satisfy his personal ambitions and to reduce the Mormon influence.

Wovoka "visited" heaven and on his return gave his people the word " . . . they must not hurt anybody, or do harm to anyone. They must not drink whiskey. They must not fight. They must do right always. They must not refuse to work for the whites . . ." And he taught them the dance he had learned in heaven—the dance that was to become the famous Ghost Dance of the Plains. His "religion" swept the Paiutes and soon spread to the nearby tribes, for if the Indians lived by the creed, they were to inherit, not heaven, but the earth. In far Dakota the Plains Indians heard about Wovoka and sent delegations to visit him. He trained visitors from other tribes and his word and dance spread to most of the Indian world.

Unfortunately, Wovoka was something of a fakir and to perpetuate his leadership used many simple tricks to astound and bind his people to him. It was one of these that led to one of the darkest hours in Army-Indian relations—Wounded Knee.

This is an interesting and informative book and fully up to the expected excellent Westernlore format. Recommended.

SCIENTIST OR COW THIEF?

Richard Wetherill: Anasazi (University of New Mexico Press, $10) by Frank McNitt is a big book about one of the Southwest's best known and controversial characters. Wetherill was a pioneer archaeologist—discoverer of the great cliff houses of Mesa Verde, Kiet Siel, and many other historic ruins. He was a Navajo trader and some say, cattle thief, cheat and brutal tyrant. Three investigations during his lifetime were followed by a fourth after his murder by a Navajo. Wetherill was envied and hated by Indian Service officials and the Superintendent of the Agency attempted to pass off his murder as a case of self-defense. This is a book that needed writing and the author, with the editorial assistance of Roland Dickey of the Press, has done a swell job of it. There are some fine photographs, good notes, bibliography and index.

HIGH ADVENTURE

Nelson Lee's *Three Years Among the Comanches* (University of Oklahoma Press, $2) is No. 9 in the fine series, The Western Frontier Library. There is a brief but scholarly introduction by the well-known Texas historian, Dr. Walter Prescott Webb. The first edition was issued in 1859 and is now a much sought collector's want. Lee arrived in Texas in 1840 and the first part of the book covers his experiences as a horse and cattle trader, trail driver to Louisiana, and Texas Ranger. The last half of the book covers the period of his captivity, 1855-58—and his escape. Dr. Webb says "There is no better description of the life of the Texas Rangers than that given by Nelson Lee" and he calls Lee's account of Comanche life before they were affected by white man "invaluable." Dr. Webb knows! A must!

RANGE LIFE

Walt Coburn's *Stirrup High* (Messner, $2.95) is a wonderful account of range life in Montana at the turn of the century. Walt is a well-known Western novelist and he reaches back to the year that he was fourteen—the year that he first made a hand on his father's ranch—for the substance of this story. And while Walt does a fine job of recapturing the thoughts of a boy, don't sell this book short as just another juvenile—it is for everyone interested in the working cowboy of half a century ago. There is a good foreword by Fred Gipson, editor of *True West,* and the book is decorated with realistic drawings by Walt's friend, Ross Santee. Tops.

Bill Leftwich has turned out a dollar volume of sassy cow country tattle called *Tracks Along the Pecos* (Pecos Press, Pecos, Texas.)

Indians made the first man tracks along the Pecos River, then came Mexicans, later the cowboys, and finally the farmers, businessmen, and oil developers. These folks drank the gypsy Pecos water and regretted it. A legend of horrors developed around Horse Head Crossing on the Pecos where thieves and border toughs lurked to prey on caravans, freighters, and trail herds. Thirsty bawling herds floundered on the briny Pecos water; some of the cattle were rimmed in helpless against the steep banks and many died in quicksand.

Several versions are given as to how the Pecos got its name. Early day Pecos was a saloon town where poker and killing were the fashionable indoor sports.

Numerous pictures of Pecos pioneers as well as several of Bill's salty sketches of Pecos scenes illustrate the text.

Another Texas County history has just been published entitled *Saga of Scurry* (Naylor, $5) by Kathryn Cotten. Scurry county lies in a part of the rolling red plains that joins the high plains caprock near the lower Panhandle. Snyder is the county seat. Settlers that followed the buffalo hunters maintained a precarious existence against the ravages of nature. Water holes were few and far between; droughts, sandstorms, northers, and tornadoes took their toll but a hardy breed of people survived. The weak died and the less courageous moved on. Then came the oil bonanza after lucky wildcatters burrowed down through the red clay crust and tapped vast pools of petroleum that have made fortunes for many, including Buddy Fogelson, Bob Hope, and others.

The Scurry Saga is primarily the story of numerous Texans—the ranchers, the city builders, the farmers, and oilmen who developed the country and exploited its resources.

C. W. Hurd's *Boggsville, Cradle of the Colorado Cattle Industry* (Bent Co. Democrat) is a fine little 92 page pamphlet that every one interested in range life will want. It includes brief chapters on the JJ and Twenty Four Circle ranches, one on the Prairie Cattle Co., and others about pioneer ranchers and the range cattle industry. There is also considerable information on the last days of Kit Carson who settled at Boggsville in 1867. Unpretentious but good local history.

GREAT WESTERN PICTURES

Indian Territory (University of Oklahoma Press, $5.95) is a great picture book based on the frontier photographic record of W. S. Prettyman. It was edited by Robert E. Cunningham. Prettyman's work covers the period 1880-1905 and it is estimated that he made at least ten thousand pictures of pioneer life in the Territory. He fitted out a covered wagon traveling studio and made many photos of the Indians before the Run. And he did a fine job on the cattlemen and their herds which ran on the Indian lands. Prettyman made the Run and pictures of everything connected with it. He continued to photograph the Oklahoma scene until 1905 and he didn't miss much. His work compares favorably with that of Huffman (Montana), Jackson (Colorado), and Erwin Smith (Texas). Cunningham did a fine job both in selecting the photos used in the book and in preparing the accompanying text. Worthwhile.

Edith Eudora Kohl gives us a refreshing flash back at Denver's fabulous past

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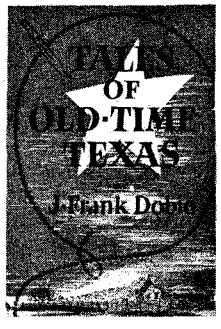

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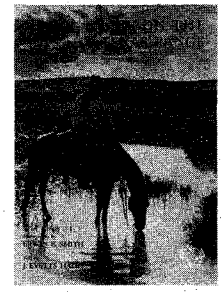

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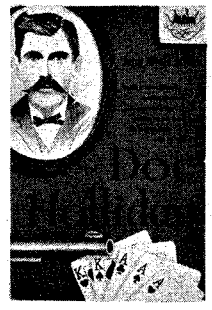

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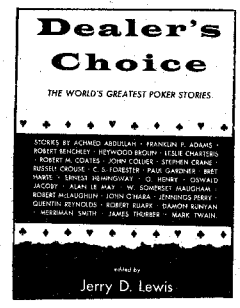

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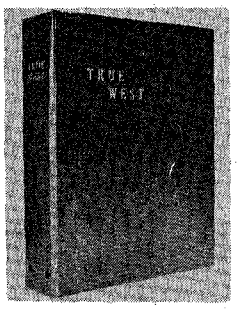

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in her new book *Denver's Historic Mansions* (Sage Books, $5).

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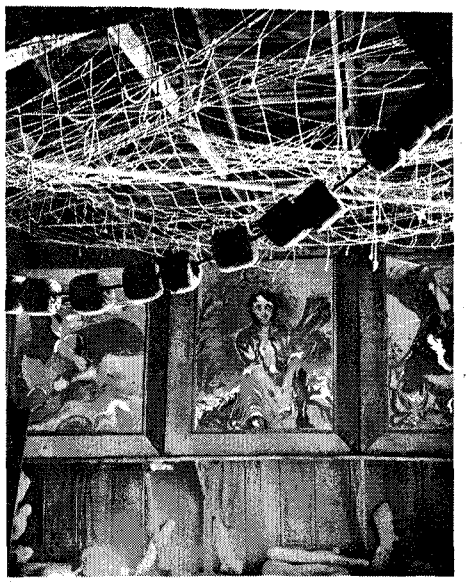

Interior of Hell's Kitchen, former home of Charles Davis, as it appeared twenty years after death of owner. At that time the bizarre paintings of the Donner-Reed tragedy still filled the room.

Mystery Man of Mullet Island

(Continued from page 13)

tery—or even that a trace of the occult may have entered into his exploits—he still was a good historian and a master researchist. He had left nothing to chance or guesswork—and, regardless of how many "historians" have done it since, he had been the first man in history to retrace the Donner Trail.

Closing the door behind me, I made my way back through the darkened cafe and dancehall, and down the rocky trail to the boat dock. My one desire now was to put distance between myself and that hopeless sepulchre, Hell's Kitchen.

I never expect to go back there again . . . and I hope that the ghost of Charles Davis never goes back there, either. I wouldn't want his ghost to know that this great legacy of paintings—his dying tribute to a tragic epic of pioneer days—had been permitted to fall to ruin beneath the layering dust of indifference.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

For a graphic account of the Donner expedition and the grim fate that befell it, read "The Donner Tragedy," by Sven Skaar, in the first (Winter) issue of FRONTIER TIMES, now on the newsstands. Don't miss it!

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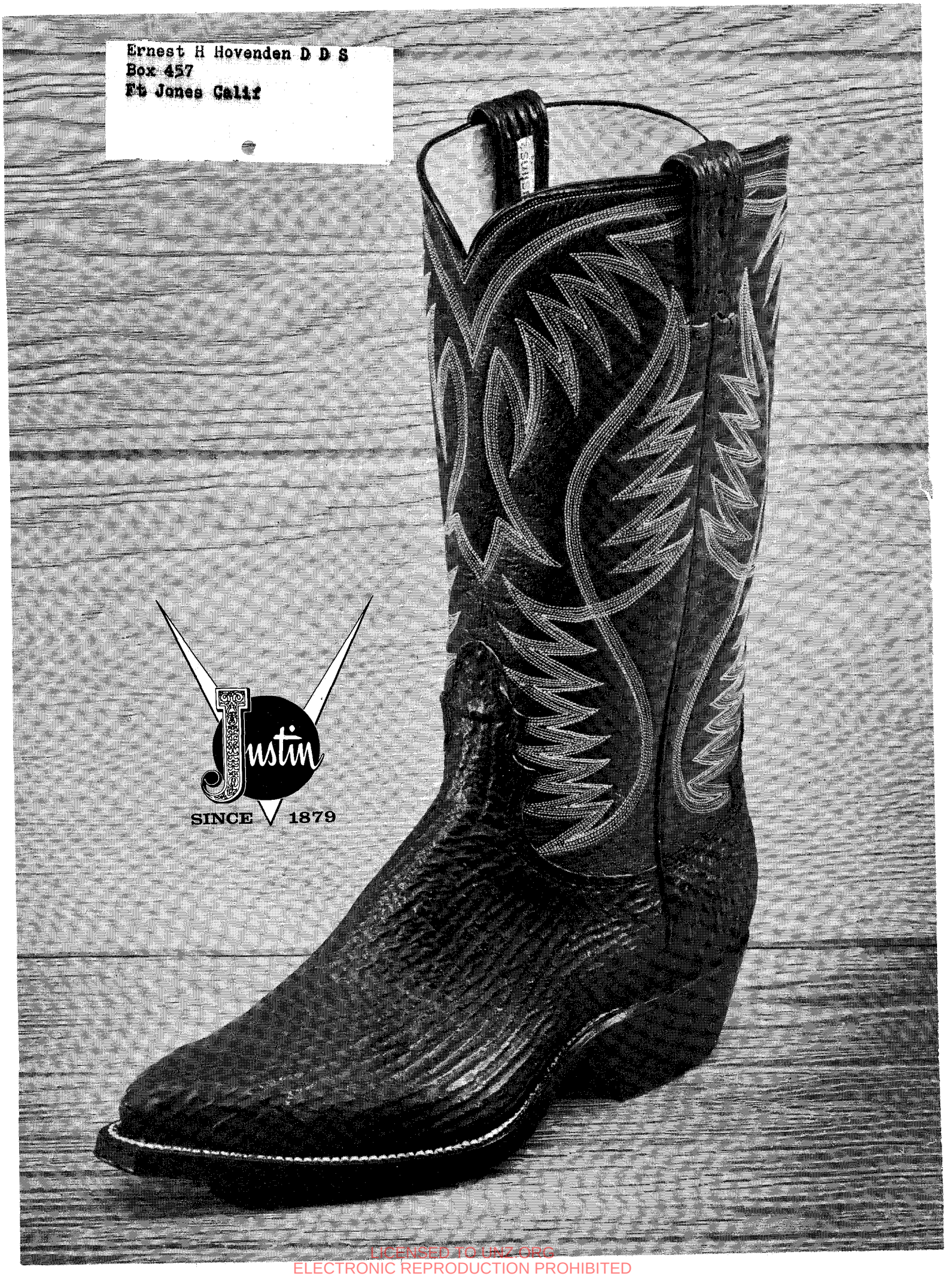

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